WITCH WINNIE AT VERSAILLES

ELIZABETH W. CHAMPNEY

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Marie Antoinette.

WITCH WINNIE AT VERSAILLES

BY

ELIZABETH W. CHAMPNEY

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WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

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WITCH WINNIE AT VERSAILLES.

CHAPTER I.

BROKEN LINKS JOINED—LIGHT ON THE STORY.

THOSE of our friends who have read a former volume of this series, entitled "Witch Winnie in Paris," will possibly remember that it closed with a promise of a sequel, to be entitled "Witch Winnie at Versailles." This sequel was postponed to give an account of Milly's summer at Shinnecock; but some of my readers have been kind enough to show an interest in the delayed story, and to ask me to keep my promise and relate what happened to Winnie, Adelaide, and Tib after Milly's return

to America, and before Winnie and Adelaide also came back to visit at Milly's cottage at Shinnecock.

Every one who goes to Paris visits Versailles. Generally the tourist goes out on an excursion train on a day of the *Grandes Eaux*, when the great fountains play in the palace gardens for the amusement of the public. At the Versailles station he is crammed into an omnibus, whisked through the most uninteresting streets, from which he sees nothing of one of the prettiest suburbs of Paris, and at the palace gate handed over to the mercies of a professional guide. The guide marshals him, with a horde of other tourists, through the interminable apartments of the palace, now converted into an art gallery, whose paintings, if placed side by side, would make seven miles of painted canvas. If the tourist is conscientiously bent on acquiring information, he tramps and tramps; one great panorama of battle succeeds another and blots it out; one portrait follows another in quick succession; and at the end of the walk he has a confused consciousness that he has looked on the faces of all the notables of France, and seen every event in the history

of the nation, and that he remembers not one of them, and is *very* tired. Then, worn out with all this mental and physical exertion, he marches over the magnificent distances of the park, is hurried from point to point in order not to miss the playing of any fountain, is jostled by the vast crowd of Parisians carrying their luncheons, eating as they walk, and dragging their tired children after them. The last view of the superb fountain of Neptune is missed entirely in a scramble to reach the station in time for the train, and the tourist returns to Paris vowing that of all tiresome places Versailles is the most unendurable.

This is not the way to visit this region of enchantment, for such it is to the lover of French history, who *lives* here for an entire season, to whom the palace becomes a *home* filled with charming guests, the old portraits whose stories he knows, whose faces have become as familiar as those of old friends. The gardens, too, were not meant to be swallowed at one gulp, but to be sipped and tasted from day to day, discovering new beauties, fixing the scene of one famous historical event after another, treating one's self to surprises, keeping back certain

localities to be explored alone with a delightful sensation of discovery and ownership, and others to be shared with merry parties of friends.

It was in this way that Winnie and her friends learned to know and love Versailles. Adelaide's father rented a little villa with a garden in the old Montreuil Quarter, not far from the palace. Mrs. Smith, Tib's mother, who had come to matronize the party, took charge of the housekeeping with the help of two white-capped French maids, Celestine and Mimi, and the three girls devoted themselves to their studies in art and history.

Their usual programme was the following: After the light French breakfast they would take a stroll or make a water-color sketch in the gardens of the palace until the opening of the *musée*, when they would each work in their different way. Tib was fascinated by the portraits of Nattier in the Attique Chimay (Salle 174), portraits representing the family and court beauties of Louis XV. Winnie was in love with the portraits Madame Lebrun painted of Marie Antoinette and her children, and copied several canvases; while Adelaide, who had a

Children of Marie Antoinette.

natural bent for architecture, studied the different styles in vogue for interior decoration and furnishings during the reigns of the three Louis —XIV., XV., and XVI. She also made studies of the landscape architecture of Le Notre, as displayed in his greatest masterpiece, the gardens of Versailles, and drew some very beautiful plans of the different bosquets and parterres. For a time Winnie gave up her pet hobby, the painting of animals, but it came on again with what Adelaide called "renewed virulence." Versailles is a military post, and cavalry officers were continually passing and repassing. Winnie armed herself with her detective camera and took snap shots at the horses, in which it must be confessed she was more interested than in their riders. Then she made rapid sketches, and finally she came into possession of a horse which she had brought to their garden and studied seriously as she would have done a human model.

After dinner they walked in the park until sunset, or sat and listened to the out-of-door concerts of the military band, while the evening was occupied by readings aloud from French history. Adelaide was always the reader.

During the readings Tib drew industriously, Mrs. Smith mended or busied herself with sewing, while Winnie pasted photographs in the books they were interleaving, arranged her "memory book," scribbled a letter with one ear open to the reading, or dozed on the divan. When she was reproached with having fallen asleep, she would give a report of what she had heard sufficiently accurate to disarm criticism, but "embroidered," as Tib declared, "by her dreams."

This faculty of mixing things, of creating a romance and living in it, was a characteristic of Winnie's. She kept the historical periods distinct, but she imagined meetings and conversations between noted characters who lived at the same time and might have met and so talked, but probably never did.

Adelaide declared that they ought to make a written record of their historical and artistic studies, and urged Winnie to write a historical romance, but this Winnie would never do.

Finally Adelaide hit upon a scheme for crystallizing their readings, conversations, and fancies about the portraits they copied and the palace and gardens in which they loved to ram-

ble, into the magical story or set of stories which follows.

Just before she began to write them an event occurred which interrupted for a short time the even flow of their lives. It was the reappearance upon the scene of Mrs. Van Silver. It will be remembered that a year before Winnie had been separated from Mrs. Van Silver's son on the eve of their engagement by Winnie's journey to Europe, and that a series of misunderstandings had sprung up which it seemed impossible to set right. This unhappy state of affairs was complicated rather than unravelled by Mrs. Van Silver, who resided in Paris, and who conceived a prejudice to Winnie from the outset.

In the last chapter of the volume "Witch Winnie in Paris" our readers were told how Mr. Van Silver came to Paris to try to clear away all misunderstandings, only to become more deeply involved, and to leave for travel in the Orient, believing that Winnie was about to become the Countess de la Tour du Pelerin.

Mrs. Van Silver was a loving mother, and a just woman in spite of her prejudices. When, after the marriage of the count to his cousin,

Angele, she understood how mistaken they had been in regard to Winnie, and when at the same time she comprehended from her son's letters the depth of his affection, which could not be stifled even by the belief that she had given him up to marry for a title, Mrs. Van Silver determined to make the *amende honorable*, beg Winnie's pardon, and effect a reconciliation.

She removed to Versailles, took rooms at the pleasant Hôtel Vatel, near the little villa where the girls were residing, and made friendly advances.

Winnie was too spirited a girl to respond. She felt that in the past Mrs. Van Silver had not been her friend, and she distrusted her now. Moreover, just because she knew that her love for this woman's son was not dead, she felt all the more that she could not with dignity accept her invitations to dine or to drive, or any of her kindly overtures. "She would believe," Winnie thought, with proper self-respect, "that I was trying to become intimate with her in order to win back her son. Neither she nor Van shall ever have any ground for that conclusion." So Winnie was always

not at home when Mrs. Van Silver called, and always had "a previous engagement subsequently invented" for all of her courteous invitations.

Mrs. Van Silver, with the perspicacity of a complete woman of the world, saw through Winnie's motives, and liked her the better for them.

"If she were indifferent to Van," Mrs. Van Silver argued, "she would accept all these privileges which I offer, for their own sake, but she is too proud to manœuvre for him, and I respect her for snubbing me. I see Van must come and fight his own battles."

Mrs. Van Silver had already written her son explaining the mistake under which they had both labored, and she followed this letter with others urging his return, and praising Winnie's behavior. The young man needed none of these admonitions. But mail facilities in the Orient are uncertain: the letters followed him up the Nile and back again, across the desert of Arabia to Sinai, reaching the convent just after he had left it. They were remailed by the monks to Jerusalem, but Mr. Van Silver changed his mind and went to Damascus in-

stead, and they finally reached him at Constantinople when the winter was nearly over.

Meanwhile Winnie had plodded away at her painting, copying the Lebrun portraits, and Mrs. Van Silver had continued her unavailing attentions. Mrs. Smith was not a society woman, and Tib was too busy to make calls. It was left to Adelaide to make any response whatever to the good lady's courtesies. Finding that the only place where she was sure of finding Winnie, where she could not run away from her, was in the galleries, Mrs. Van Silver affected a great admiration for the portraits of Marie Antoinette, and, guide-book in one hand and lorgnette in the other, would suddenly appear when Winnie was in the midst of her work, and begin a most animated conversation, something like the following, which Winnie managed to make the last.

Mrs. Van S. Is this portrait of the Queen [see frontispiece] the one to which Saint Amand refers in "Marie Antoinette and the End of the Old Régime"?

Winnie. I really don't know.

Mrs. Van S. Oh, yes, you do. You remember he says she wears a velvet cap surmounted

by a plumed pompon, that her expression is dreamy and melancholy, as though she had a presentiment of her future fate. But where are the children about whom he makes such pathetic remarks?

Winnie. That is a later portrait painted when the Queen was older and troubles had begun to gather. You see she is not at all sad in this picture. In the painting to which you refer she is dressed in red velvet. Here, as you see, her robe is blue velvet bordered with sable over a petticoat of creamy satin. The cap and fichu are not unlike in each portrait.

The wily Mrs. Van Silver knew this as well as Winnie. She had only asked the question to make conversation, but she was unable to pursue her advantage. When she asserted that the painting on which Winnie was engaged was a particular favorite of hers, and that she would like to purchase Winnie's copy, the girl replied rather shortly that it was also a favorite of her own, and the copy was not for sale.

Mrs. Van S. But you might make me another.

Winnie. I might, but you must excuse me, my time in Europe is limited. I have wasted

as much as I have any right in the pure pleasure of copying. I must study now seriously. I shall not come to the gallery any more after to-day.

Mrs. Van S. Not paint in the gallery! You are surely not going to leave Versailles?

Winnie. I don't know. I have not formed my plans.

Mrs. Van S. What do you call serious study if this is not?

Winnie. I want to be an animal painter, and I ought to be studying animals instead of amusing myself in this way.

Mrs. Van Silver had too much tact to inquire just where and how Winnie intended to pursue her study of animals. She divined the truth, that she had driven Winnie away from the galleries by her visits, and she wisely decided to let her completely alone for fear of driving her from Versailles.

And so Winnie began photographing the horses of the cuirassiers and making sketches of their action. She had no notion, however, of emulating Detaille and becoming a painter of military subjects, and the fleeting glimpses which she caught of the horses as they passed

on the street or on parade were unsatisfactory. There seemed to be grounds for Mrs. Van Silver's fear that Winnie would leave Versailles to study under some animal painter. She communicated her fears to Adelaide, confided to her that she had every hope that her son would soon come to Versailles, and begged her to keep Winnie until after his arrival.

Adelaide entered into the plot, and began delicately to attempt to sound Winnie's feelings in regard to the young man, and found, to her own delight, that though Winnie never mentioned Mr. Van Silver she was not averse to hearing him spoken of. Mrs. Van Silver had avoided speaking of him to Winnie through delicacy, and Winnie had not heard what had become of him after the last misunderstanding, which she now understood, and in her secret heart longed to explain. She was, therefore, glad when Adelaide remarked casually that Mrs. Van Silver had told her that her son was travelling in Egypt, but was planning to join her in the spring. Winnie did not reply after this piece of information, but Adelaide, venturing a furtive glance, saw that her color had heightened, and that the corners of her lips

were twitching. After this she did not scruple to refer to Van frequently, and even to ask Winnie bluntly if she did not desire a reconciliation.

"If he wants it enough to come and ask for it, not otherwise."

"He will come," Adelaide replied confidently. From this time Adelaide persisted in regarding the reconciliation as really accomplished, though Winnie had made her promise solemnly that she would not interfere in the matter in the slightest degree, and she knew Winnie well enough to be certain that if she broke faith and gave Mrs. Van Silver the very vaguest hint possible, it would only make dire mischief. So the reconciliation which both desired was left to propitious circumstances ; and circumstances frequently seem to be controlled by some tricky, malevolent sprite, and are most averse to helping true lovers.

As spring approached Winnie grew restless and talked of going to Holland for the summer, to study sheep painting with Mauve at Laren.

Adelaide fought this idea for a time by interesting Winnie, in their evening readings, in the story of Fouquet and the Fête at Vaux.

"I should like to paint the arrival of the court at the château on the eve of that event," Winnie remarked. "Think of all those lumbering, gilded chariots, regular Barnum band-wagons, and the costumes of that gorgeous Louis XIV. period, with the background of the gray old château! I have a mind to go down to Vaux and make some studies."

"You could not have better facilities for your purpose than you have right here," Adelaide urged. "There are plenty of the very coaches you speak of in the *Musée des Voitures*. Why not make careful studies of them now that you have the opportunity? You can paint in the horses later. Horses are to be found everywhere and anywhere, but not the old coaches."

Winnie acted on this advice, but with girlish perversity determined to finish her studies and leave Versailles before Mr. Van Silver's arrival. Adelaide had told her that he was expected in May, and she was making her plans to go in April, not knowing that Mrs. Van Silver had received a telegram from Constantinople, announcing that he hoped to arrive a month earlier than he had intended.

Adelaide was in a fever of anxiety to keep Winnie, and to gain time she invented stories like Scheherezade. She discontinued her drawing and wrote busily during the day, and in the evening read aloud her wonder stories.

The first of these she entitled "Aloe," and gave the clue to the scheme on which the following ones were constructed.

CHAPTER II.

ALOE, THE FLOWER OF A HUNDRED YEARS.

"Tear of the aloe, balm for all woman's tears;
Flower of the aloe, flower of a hundred years."

"I CALLED on Mrs. Van Silver this afternoon," Adelaide remarked as she spread her manuscript on the table under the student lamp, and laid a tiny silver *bonbonnière* beside it, "and she gave me this very curious object which her son has sent her from Egypt."

"Still in Egypt?" asked Tib. "Then he will hardly be here as soon as he anticipated."

Adelaide did not see fit to explain that the curio had been received early in the season, but

continued her preface to her story with no apparent notice of the question.

"Observe, please, that this little casket is decorated with a six-pointed star in gold inlay, formed by the interlacing lines of two triangles, and that there is a border of strange Oriental characters. Van found it in the mummy-case of an Egyptian princess, in a tomb which he helped discover between Abou Simbel and Philæ. With it was a little roll of papyrus which explained its wonderful story."

Winnie had been looking listlessly at the *bonbonnière*. "These characters are not Egyptian hieroglyphics," she said incredulously.

"No," replied Adelaide, "they are Hebrew letters; the roll, too, was written in Hebrew. Van carried it to one of his friends, a learned rabbi, who translated it for him."

"Hebrew in Egypt!" said Mrs. Smith. "Has your story anything to do with Moses or Joseph?"

"With neither. The manuscript showed that the princess was Solomon's Egyptian wife, of whom we read in the Bible. You know the forty-fifth Psalm was their epithalamium, and it takes on a pathetic significance when read

with the commentary afforded by my little roll. Solomon loved the princess. He did everything that a fabulously wealthy and powerful sultan could to make her happy. He lavished upon her all the arts and gifts known to mortal man. He did more, for the Arabs say he was in league with the genii. This mystical design of the triangle-star was engraved also upon his signet-ring, and by its talismanic power this royal Aladdin commanded his slave of the wonderful lamp. He understood the language of birds and animals. He had a flying carpet, which could transport him a thousand miles in a moment of time, and he brought to bear all the occult sciences in his endeavor to keep the love of his Egyptian queen. He had but one rival, and that was homesickness. The little foreigner pined for the southland. We see a hint of this, and of his consuming desire to make her in the psalm. While the king brooded over his happiness and his fears, a bird in the royal aviary sang of a wonderful tree away in the heart of the Himalayas, an aloe-tree, which bloomed once in a century, and whose juice exuded in tear-shaped, amber-like drops, a panacea for all grief.

"It is the bird's song which Solomon caused to be engraved around the rim of the box:

> "'Tear of the aloe, balm for all woman's tears;
> Flower of the aloe, flower of a hundred years.'

From that moment the navy of Solomon brought all kinds of aloes-wood by the way of the Red Sea from Asia. The resinous gums burned night and day in the queen's palace, filling the air with their heavy perfume, and Solomon wrote:

"'All thy garments smell of aloes out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.'

"It was a loving fiction, the queen was not glad. She wept in secret, and the king knew it, and would have given his kingdom to have dried her tears. He had to pay a higher price. The genius who served him had agreed to run ninety-nine errands for nothing, but if he demanded the hundredth he must forfeit his soul. Ninety-nine times had the spirit done his bidding, and Solomon had said farewell to him, as he hoped forever; but when did a lover resist a woman's tears? He rubbed the talisman once more, and the genius came.

"'Bring me,' he said, 'the tear of the aloe, which dries all woman's tears.'

"The slave brought it. Open the box, Winnie, and you will find it lying there."

Winnie raised the lid and saw what seemed to be a tear-shaped gem. She looked through it toward the light, and it took on the most beautiful amethystine tints. It was delicately, subtly odorous, and shot with lambent lights.

"'When the lady weeps,' said the spirit, 'if she touches her eyelids gently with this tear, her weeping will be changed to laughter.'

"Solomon carried the precious tear in triumph to his bride. She was weeping at that moment in the ivory palace which he had built for her, and he touched the tear-drops which glistened on her long lashes with the magic tear, and the princess ceased to weep.

"But evil spirits are tricky. They serve mortals as little as they can help. The genius did not tell Solomon all the conditions of the metamorphosis until after it was over. With that touch the spirit of the century-plant blended magically with that of the princess, and it drifted away and bloomed again in another century. To all appearance she died

there in the arms of her royal lover, but she lived and laughed again in Egypt, the bride of the great Rameses. Not one century but many separated her from Solomon, for the last wish of the one who essays the charm is fulfilled, and the princess had been dreaming when she wept of Luxor and Thebes and the epoch of Egypt's greatest glory."

"It is a pretty fairy tale," said Tib, "but I don't see what it has to do either with us or with the periods of French history which we have been studying."

"Just this," Adelaide replied. "Do you remember that the other day Winnie was complaining that youth is so brief, the *belle saison* that we are enjoying now, before one must change into the old maid or the matron?"

"How long is this delectable season of young ladyhood supposed to last?" asked Tib, the practical.

"Fifteen, or possibly seventeen years," Winnie replied quickly. "You know Alphonse Karr says, 'The great and terrible influence of women is exercised between their eighteenth and thirty-fifth years'—that is to say, it comes to an end at precisely the moment

when women become somewhat sensible, and when their influence might tend to good. Adelaide is quite right. I do rebel that my *belle saison* is so limited. I would like to distribute my fifteen years through the centuries that cover the history of Versailles."

"That is precisely my idea," Adelaide replied. "I have imagined in my stories, in which I have embodied our researches, that Winnie has experimented with this tear of the aloe. I fancy that it had exerted a sort of fascination over her mind, that she carried it about with her at all times, until an hour came when she was really unhappy. It was the hour when she must leave Versailles. Her paintings were safely bestowed in packing-cases, her trunks strapped, she had said good-by to us all, and had run away to the park to spend her last afternoon in its shades. She wished to impress vividly upon her memory all its characteristics, and she paused on the terrace of the *Parterre d'Eau*, striving to take a mental photograph for future reference of the general view: the grand avenue which unrolls itself before one broken by parterres of brilliant flowers, shining sheets of water, and green expanses of turf;

the great basins in the foreground bordered by the statues of the river nymphs ; the fountains flashing in the sunlight far down the avenue, the charming *allées* on the left and right leading away into the quiet of the forest, the clipped hedges and other grotesque specimens of topiary gardening, the infinite variety of the white forms of the statues, and the song of the gurgling, splashing water mingling with that of the birds.

"I fancy her thinking, 'It is beautiful just as it is, but what would it be to see these gardens in the time of Louis XIV., to know how the idea of this paradise sprang into being, to watch the growth, to have known the greatest of all landscape architects, Le Notre, and his munificent royal patron, *le Grand Monarque*, and all the nobles of his court? Life must have been statelier, more dignified in those days, to be in harmony with its courtly setting.' Balzac has a theory that human development depends upon environment. Just as the jungle produces the tiger, the desert the lion, and the farm-yard domestic animals, while the poultry-yard brings out the slyness of the thieving fox, and the lonely forest road the brigandage of

Bosquet de Triomphe, Gardens of Versailles, under Louis XIV.

the wolf, so circumstances mould man more than heredity, and the son of a noble kidnapped in infancy grows up a low and brutal outlaw, while the foundling educated becomes more gentle than his foster parents. Winnie asked herself what manner of people gave fêtes in such palace gardens as this, and listened to the plays of Molière in which he personally acted? The men, she thought, must have all been noble, the ladies as lovely in character as in face, if beauty of surroundings produce beauty of character. 'How I would love,' I think of her as saying to herself, 'to see the beginnings of Versailles, to feel the spirit of the latter half of the seventeenth century! Instead of this I am going back to commonplace America, where men are absorbed in stocks and bonds, and women in church fairs and soup kitchens.' A spirit of revolt surged through her. 'I don't want to go back!' she cried passionately. 'I have lived here so long that my heart has grown into the place, and I cannot tear myself away.' The *bonbonnière* was in her hand, she raised the lid, and took out the beautiful gem-like tear. For an instant she hesitated. Perhaps her present tears were better, after all, than laugh-

ter in that unknown time. No, it could not be ; laughter must always be better than weeping, and she touched her eyelids with the magical tear.

CHAPTER III.

HOW VERSAILLES WAS BORN.

ALL at once something very strange happened. She was no longer weeping, but laughing at some jest of the gentleman by her side, a handsome man in a very charming suit for a fancy ball, but one totally out of place here, out-of-doors in daylight in the park. But it was not to be denied that it was very becoming to its wearer, the Louis Quatorze coat and tunic, the knee-breeches and silk stockings, the great curling wig which framed his familiar face, for in spite of the strangeness of the costume it was Van who stood before her, and it was a pleasant surprise to find that he, too, had glided back into the reign

of Louis XIV. As she looked at him the costume appeared quite appropriate, and she forgot that he had ever dressed in any other way.

"'Are we at Versailles?' she asked, looking about her at the closely shaven lawns, the basins, fountains, and statues which had a familiar aspect. It was all in the formal, grandiose style of the magnificent royal garden, but she did not recognize just that particular terrace with its carved balustrade.

"'Versailles! Oh, no; the king has nothing so ornate as this in that wild hunting-park. This is *Vaux le Vicomte.* Have you forgotten that you are to play here in my new comedy, which I have written for the grand fête which the Superintendent Fouquet is to give the king? You slept during the latter part of our drive from Paris, and do not appear to be quite awake yet. The diligence was stuffy. Let us walk about in the gardens; the air will revive you.'

"The dazed feeling passed away, the circumstances all came back to her; she remembered reading the day before of Fouquet's famous fête, which took place on August 17th, 1661. That magnificent festival, with which he had

hoped to propitiate Louis XIV., had always exercised a fascination over her, and she was delighted to think that she was to be really in it.

"'I wonder who I am,' she thought, 'and who Van is. Perhaps he is Fouquet himself.' But no; he had not the foxy face of the crafty financier. He had spoken of writing a play for the occasion; odd that she could not remember just who had done that—was it Racine or La Fontaine? Should she ask him? No; he had thought her a little unbalanced in mind because she could not tell just where she was. He might suspect her quite insane if she showed herself ignorant as to his personality. She would wait for something to give her the clue to his identity.

"'These grounds are a perfect paradise,' her companion remarked. 'Fouquet has a talent for discovering unknown geniuses. I don't know where he picked up that clever fellow Le Notre, but he has turned this barren waste into a marvel of beauty. Nothing like it has ever been seen in France.'

"'Why, yes,' Winnie was on the point of remarking, 'it is all very regal, but it is exactly

like Versailles, only not so vast;' but she held her peace, reflecting in time that in 1661 Le Notre had not yet been engaged by Louis XIV. to create his masterpiece of landscape gardening.

"'Just look at those fountains,' her friend continued, 'they are a *chef d'œuvre* of hydraulic engineering; the piping alone was a vast expense and very ingeniously contrived; and see how they break in the air like great columns of crystal, shattering in a shower of diamonds! The spouting tritons, the nymphs and naiads, the satyrs, dryads, and monsters are the work of the sculptors Coustou and Pierre Puget. How beautifully they are set off by the broad expanses of close-clipped lawns, over which we may wander at will! Le Notre does not like parterres of blossoming flowers, except for those who must remain prisoners in the upper stories of their houses; for flowers, he says, can only be walked on by the eyes, and he loves better the velvet pelouses, where the foot sinks luxuriously, where children may tumble and boys play games, and maidens and youths trip it in the dance. And see how harmoniously these level green spaces rest the eye and bal-

ance the ornament of the statues and fountains! This garden is a triumph of art and mechanical contrivance. The world will never see it surpassed.'

"'Do not say that,' Winnie replied. 'If this young man Le Notre should attract the attention of the king, he might, backed with the royal finances, achieve still vaster enterprises.'

"Her companion smiled in a significant manner. 'They say that he has already had the use of the State funds,' he replied. 'You know Fouquet is Superintendent of Finances. His private fortune is enormous, and he is such a kind patron, that we men of ideas are willing to work for him for little more than love, so far as we are personally concerned; but the necessary outlay for the creation of such a paradise as this must have been stupendous—I fear more than any private fortune could sustain. Le Notre will never be less limited as to expense if twenty kings should become his patrons.'

"Winnie restrained her wild desire to prophesy Le Notre's career. It was so easy to do so with the history of France behind her.

"'Do you know Le Notre?' she asked. 'I would like to meet him.'

"'He will come behind the scenes after the play. This fête is a triumph for him, as it will be for us. This is different, Armande, is it not, from the travelling cart of a strolling theatrical troupe? But are they any happier in this grand château than we were tramping through the provinces and giving open-air entertainments under the *maronniers* in the village place, or on the boards of little country theatres?'

"At the question a picture flitted through Winnie's mind. Was it a memory of a real scene, or of something she had read?

"'It was toward evening, and a cart, drawn by four lean oxen led by a brood mare, whose colt was cantering round and round the cart like a little fool that it was, slowly entered the town. The cart was full of coffers, trunks, and great packets of painted canvas, on the top of which sat a lady dressed in a costume partly of the country, partly of the town. Beside the cart walked a young man who had on breeches like those worn by comedians when they represent a hero of antiquity, and in place of shoes antique buskins, mudded up to the ankles.

A third player followed, bearing a violoncello.'

"(*Note.*—This quotation is from a description of a company of strolling players by an author of the time—Scarron, in his *Roman Comique.*)

"She saw the van halted in front of the village inn. A few other players straggled along in time for dinner. An open-air theatre was usually constructed of canvas in a natural amphitheatre, sometimes backed by a castle wall, or down the Breton coast, when the boom of the surf formed a deep bass undertone to the shrill piping of their little orchestra. Her present companion, who seemed to be playwright, stage manager, travelling agent and proprietor, as well as principal actor of the little troupe, stood at the entrance of the inclosure, and shouted forth the merits of his 'Théâtre Illustre.'

"She herself took the gate-money, and regarded with interest the crowd of peasants and fisher folk in their picturesque costumes as they swarmed in and took their seats on the rough benches formed of planks. Sometimes the play was given in a fish market, and the audience sat on overturned tubs and baskets; some-

times in a great barn, and the hay-loft took the place of the boxes; sometimes they contested with lion-tamers and merry-go-rounds for the patronage of the public at fairs, or refreshed the minds of penitents, after the religious exercises, when some saint's day was celebrated by a great pilgrimage.

"There was much misery in the country, for the period was that directly following the war of the Fronde, and there was to be still greater destitution, occasioned by the ruinous taxes imposed to support one hundred thousand nobles and the lavish expenditures of *le Grand Monarque.*

"The Huguenots, an industrious and generally well-to-do class, had left or were leaving the country. As yet Colbert had not established the industries which for a time stayed the avalanche of ruin, but in spite of hard times in the present, and a darker outlook for the future, the people of the provinces were patient and even gay.

" 'Laugh and forget is the fashion of France,' and wherever the players came they were welcomed.

"The van halted one night before a large and thriving mill. It was a roomy, picturesque

stone building, partly overhanging a brawling stream. The mountains were behind it, and in the valley several little hamlets, whose fertile surrounding fields were watered by the same little river which had settled down from its mad exuberance, and flowed peacefully between grain fields toward the sea. Near the largest of the villages the castle of the seigneur rose protectingly. It was a smiling, lovely landscape, suggestive of peace and prosperity. There were many laden donkeys going and coming from the mill, carrying the golden grain and bringing away the good flour. The miller's powdered boys were busy lifting the great sacks. There were cheerful songs and merry jokes to the accompaniment of the humming machinery; everything spoke of thrift and contentment.

"The miller himself came out to meet them, and offered his large warehouse for a theatre. The boys were soon merrily at work rolling out the barrels and hoisting the bags to the upper lofts. The air was white and thick as with winter snowflakes as they plied their brooms to make the audience-chamber fit for the holiday gowns of the peasants.

"Winnie, or Armande, as she was now called, sat in the door of the van and gave advertising circulars to the farmers' boys as they came and went, and a poster was nailed to the door of the *maieries* in each of the little villages, and the town-crier engaged to shout the attractions in the public place.

"They remained several days at the mill, for Winnie was weary of journeying, and it was good to sleep in a bed, though only upon fresh straw.

"The jolly miller enjoyed the representations, and had them play until they had exhausted all their repertoire, and then repeat it over again. It was something of an expense and inconvenience to him, but he did not mind it. He liked to see the villagers flocking from all the country round to his mill. Many of them were his patrons, and he gossiped with them before and after the play about local interests, the state of the country, and the crops.

"'Thank Heaven, we can never be quite beggared here,' they agreed. 'As long as the river runs it will nourish the crops and turn the mill, and pour golden coin into your pockets and mine.'

"The miller's daughter was the belle of the country-side, partly on account of her own attractions and partly because of her father's well-known gains. She was sweet and hospitable to the travelling actresses, and served them at table with the best cheeses and preserves of cherries and black-currant cordial, while the men tossed off tankards of Breton cider at the expense of their host. Among all Winnie's journeyings, it was the spot that was greenest in her memory ; and of all her friends, Jacqueline, the miller's daughter, had the warmest place in her heart, and she would always remember her.

"It was the last night of their stay at the mill. The man who had been playing the violoncello in their little orchestra, and who seemed in this strange retrospect to be her brother and a young student, took her place at the door, and she skipped around to the rear of the stage and hurriedly donned an exaggerated caricature of the fashionable costume of the time.

"The play was the '*Précieuses Ridicules.*' The manager of the troupe acted as prompter, without notes, proving himself the author of the comedy, which would have better suited a Parisian audience. The satire was lost on these

simple people, who were not familiar with the personages who had called it forth. They liked a play that had been given the night before, when the wit of a stock kind had been directed against doctors. They listened in stupid, unresponsive amazement, until the principal actor dropped the prompter's part and bounded upon the stage. He was irresistible, a comedian to his finger-tips. Versatile, quick, artistic, he had the knack of distorting his visage in a way to make his audience die of laughter. He spoke in a variety of voices, cut a hundred capers, interpolated impromptu jokes, and won to himself enthusiastic encores by his original quips and pranks. As for Armande, she went through the stilted caricature of the affectations of learned ladies of the time with a dumb wonder at herself, for she did not remember ever to have studied her lines.

"Presently a gentleman more richly dressed than any in the audience entered. For an instant even the popular comedian failed to hold the attention of his hearers, and a murmur of 'Monsieur le Vicomte' ran along the benches. Armande heard it, and threw greater spirit into her acting.

"'Bravo!' whispered her companion, and 'Bravo!' exclaimed the newcomer with a hearty laugh, and the curtain went down in the midst of a round of applause.

"The grand seigneur presented himself at the green-room, which was the van itself, drawn close to the rear door of the wareroom. He sat on one of the packing-boxes, and overwhelmed the principal actors with compliments.

"'My name,' he said, 'is Fouquet. You may, perhaps, have heard of me. I am desolated that I cannot call you, sir, by name. It is the fault of the retired corner of the world in which I have lately buried myself, for surely so great an actor is famous in Paris.'

"'I am entirely unknown,' the guest replied, 'either by my family name, Poquelin, or by the stage alias of Molière, which I have lately assumed.'

"Winnie drew a deep breath. So her friend was Molière. Why had she not guessed it, and how could he call himself unknown?

"'You will not remain so long,' said Fouquet. 'Trust me, I know a genius when I see him. It is my delight to surround myself by them. You have made a witty satire on Mademoiselle

de Scudéry,' he continued. 'How many times I have been bored to death by the bombastic persiflage of her precious band of high-flown ladies at the Hôtel Rambouillet—"Approach the Counsellor of the Graces," meaning, in plain language, a mirror. Ah! I am amply revenged now. I have not so heartily enjoyed a half hour in my whole life.'

"He invited them to visit his château, and on the following day showed them over the castle and his grounds.

"'I am contemplating great changes,' he said. 'I shall extend and beautify my park. I have in my employ a talented young landscape gardener, Le Notre, to whom I have given *carte blanche* to lay it out. La Quintinie is my florist, the best in the world. You must see my conservatories; but they are nothing to what we shall have here in a few years.

"'You praised that new portion of the château; it does not please me. I have seen some plans by Levau which I like better. I shall have it all cleared away, and begin again from the foundations. The building will cost a million and a half sterling, but it will be the finest castle in Brittany when finished. Lebrun and

his pupil, Jouvenet, will decorate it with frescoes. Come and see my paintings. I have some fine ones by Lesueur and Claude Lorraine, and the best portrait painters of Paris are busy making me a collection of portraits of the most beautiful ladies of France. I know them all, and it will be pleasant for me to see their lovely faces as I pace my portrait gallery in my home of loneliness, far from the gay scenes of Paris.'

"As they walked through the castle, Winnie caught a glimpse of a proud and stately woman, who returned her curious glance by a stare of haughty disapproval, and suddenly turned her back and disappeared.

"'That is the chatelaine, my mother,' their host explained. 'She is a good and pious woman. Pardon her *brusquerie*.' Winnie understood that it was the piety of the Vicomtesse of Vaux which was responsible for her disapproval of her son's patronage of actors and actresses, and she was not offended.

"Fouquet served them a delicious repast in the great hall of the castle. 'I hope you approve of my *chef*,' he said. 'His name is Vatel; he is a true artist. The king himself is not so well served.' Fouquet little imagined

that the time would come when he must content himself with prison fare, and his cook, as *maître d'hôtel* at Chantilly, would cater for the king.

"This glimpse of the life of a grand seigneur was something new in Winnie's experience in her new-old life. The man, too, interested her, and she could not help comparing him with her friend, Molière. It seemed to her that the latter expressed the verb to *be*, and Fouquet the verb to *have*. They were both useful verbs. Which did she prefer?

"As they parted the young noble said, with that smile which was irresistible with women, 'I shall never forget the leading lady of the Mill of Vaux. We shall surely meet again.'

"After this the strolling life of the student troupe continued. Molière wrote play after play, and the little company acted them, one actor frequently taking three parts. He wrote parts especially for those who were to take them suited for their voices, their talents, their *personale*. Winnie, as Armande, had always the heroine's part, in spite of the jealousy of her older sister, and of the pretty *danseuse* who formed their *corps de ballet* of one. Ar-

mande was the heroine and Molière the lover. He never tired of writing and repeating publicly those impassioned words, and what a lover he was! He has left us this description of Armande:

"'Her eyes are small.

"'True, they are small, but they are full of light, the brightest and most winning possible.

"'Her mouth is large.

"'It is the most attractive, the most lovable mouth in the world.

"'She is not tall enough.

"'No; but her carriage is easy and graceful.

"'As for her wit—

"'The finest and most delicate.

"'Her conversation—

"'Is charming.

"'She is capricious.

"'I like a beautiful woman to be capricious. Her caprices become her. Everything in the world connects itself in my heart with her. The idea of her has so seized me that I can think of nothing in her absence which gives me the least pleasure.'

"It seemed strange to Winnie afterward that she did not realize Molière's genius; that she

heard him read his dramas without comprehending their greatness. It was not the worshipful privilege to know him which she thought it would be; but she realized his love, and Armande in these early days was good and true and helpful. She mended the tights as she sat perched on the top of the jolting van, and studied and rehearsed her part as they walked behind it together, repeating the love passages oftener than was needed to impress them upon her memory for the sake of the pleasure that it gave the author to hear them from her lips. She enjoyed the applause of the simple people who flocked to hear them, she pitied their misfortunes and shared their pleasures, wearing the flowers and dancing with the peasants after the play on the public square. Life was a continual picnic, a holiday excursion. But Molière, as he wrote, felt ambition unfolding its wings within him. 'I shall play before more cultivated audiences,' he said. 'I feel that I may one day even be famous enough to play before the king, and when I can afford a *maisonette* we shall be married.'

"After this the student troupe was called to Paris by the kindness of the Prince de Conti,

himself a fellow-student of Molière's, who had never forgotten the boyish friendship formed in the old Jesuit college.

"He had interceded with the king, and the company of actors were presently installed in the Hôtel de Petit Bourbon as the Troupe de Monsieur.

"Fouquet, too, did not forget his promise, but sent to Molière to write two plays to be acted at the great festival which he intended to give the king. He was never in Paris without attending the play at the Hôtel de Petit Bourbon, or at the theatre without presenting himself in the green-room. Often when he was not there, gorgeous floral tributes, sent up from the country by the florist, Le Quintinie, were handed to the stage for Mademoiselle Armande Bejart, and on the card there was always added 'The Leading Lady of the Mill of Vaux.'

"And now Winnie's retrospect had brought her back again to the great festival of 1661, when Fouquet, Vicomte de Vaux and Superintendent of Finance, threw open his transformed château and his magnificent gardens for the reception of his sovereign.

"The vast park was dotted with the six thou-

sand guests admitted on this occasion. The coaches of the royal party, stupendous, gilded chariots, such as Winnie had seen preserved in the show stables of Versailles, but had forgotten, so completely was she now identified with the period, rolled ponderously up the broad avenue, attended by a vast cavalcade of nobles and followed by other monumental, gilded vehicles. Louis XIV., sumptuous in velvets and jewels and ermine, but with a malicious scowl, giving a sinister expression to his features, alighted, and entered the château followed by the Queen-mother, Anne of Austria, who made up for her son's evident ill-humor by a genuine cordiality as she gave her hand to her host.

"The nobles were seated at tables bearing four hundred services of solid gold. Each of the ladies found in the apartment provided for her a superb toilette *à la duchesse.* Winnie felt, when she saw her own reflection in the cheval glass, that there was no lady in all that brilliant company more richly robed or more beautiful than herself. No, nor in that long portrait gallery, through which she was now pacing demurely, looking up with the royal party at the portraits of the beauties of the day—La

Vallière, Madame de Sévigné, and many a princess of the blood and noble duchess; for Fouquet had achieved his boast. They were all there, smiling sweetly upon him from their frames; and secretly locked in a casket, which he called his 'chicken-coop,' were love-letters from many of these proud dames. In all the kingdom there was not another Sir Lancelot so favored by the ladies as Fouquet. Not, he was well aware, solely on account of his personal fascination, but very possibly also because of his lavish generosity and princely gifts. The king frowned more ominously as he took it all in. What mattered it that the fête was in his honor, and that, as his mother whispered, the master of Vaux was ruining himself in a vain attempt to please his royal master? It did not please him to see himself surpassed at every point. He had no such cook, no such gardens, no such galaxy of genius—painters, poets, musicians, actors, artists, every mode of expression—among his friends, while among the beauties who looked upon Fouquet with kindness were several for whose favor royalty longed. Fouquet was more brilliant, as well as handsomer than the king, and in his presence Louis

felt his own inferiority. He remembered an innuendo of the great Cardinal Mazarin, spoken as though in commendation of Fouquet, but containing a gliding serpent of detraction. 'If our Minister of Finances could get women and building out of his head, he would be capable of great things.'

"It was notorious that the public funds had suffered great depredation, whether really at the hands of the late cardinal or of Fouquet Louis did not care. Here was a pretext, and Louis resolved upon his ruin. Winnie heard him conversing with a blunt, plain man, Colbert by name.

"'Without doubt, sire,' replied the latter, 'the superintendent's affairs would not bear examination.'

"Winnie thought of this while acting her part in *Les Fâcheux;* thought of it when the king sent for her to congratulate her, saying that he hoped some day to see her play at Versailles, for this fête had suggested to his mind a scheme by which that simple hunting château might be embellished; she thought of it when, after viewing the illuminated fountains, she heard the king request Fouquet to present Le

Notre to him, and heard him ask the great landscape gardener if these fountains could not be surpassed if *carte blanche* were given him as to funds. She had witnessed the birth of the idea of Versailles.

"The poet La Fontaine had read a poem lauding Fouquet, and referring thus to Molière's play:

> "'It is a work by Molière;
> This writer of a style so rare
> Is nowadays the court's delight;
> His name, so rapid is its flight,
> Beyond the bounds of Rome must be;
> Amen! for he's the man for me.'

"And now the king was talking with Molière and La Fontaine of the patronage he intended to extend to arts and letters. It was all plain to Winnie. Louis intended to seize for himself all the advantages which Fouquet had collected, and dash from his pedestal of greatness the man who had dared to rival him.

"Impelled by an impulse of friendship, she sped across the velvet lawn, among the shadowy *bosquets* no longer lighted by the colored fountains, and found Fouquet resting upon a marble bench.

"'Ah! you have come away, as I have, to rest for a moment from the crowd, from the heat, the glare, the noise. What do you think of it all? It is a glorious triumph, is it not? Enough to intoxicate any man.'

"'Yes, I fear you are intoxicated,' she said, looking at his glowing eyes. 'You do not see your deadly peril. The king is envious, and is plotting your ruin.'

"'What makes you think so?' he asked quickly.

"'I heard him insinuate that all this magnificence could not have been paid for by your private fortune—that it came from the treasury of the State.'

"'Pah! that is nothing. A superintendent of finance would be considered a great fool if he did not profit by his position. The king voices only his opinion of what he would do were he in my place—what every one who had the brains to manage it would do. It is the spirit of the times to be successful; you must be unscrupulous, only you must be adroit enough to cover your tracks. My enemies can prove nothing. No man stands better with the king than I. I have just given the king a mil-

lion in ready money for his private necessities. His Majesty could not find another superintendent who would manage such a little loan without having it come to public knowledge. I have bought up every one, even the king.'

"'Alas!' Winnie cried, 'you are deceiving yourself; you are not safe.'

"'I thank you for your concern,' Fouquet replied, 'for it bespeaks your regard. To content you, I will fortify Belle Isle, so that I can have a refuge to which to retreat, and to embark from in case of danger; but it is all a figment of your imagination. Vaux is enchanted; it is as safe as it is beautiful; and this castle of enchantment I now offer to you. They are all fools who think this festival is in honor of the king; it is in your honor. The Vicomtesse shall pack for Paris, and you—you alone shall be the leading lady of Vaux.' What the real Armande would have said under the circumstances we do not know; but Winnie was still enough of a child of the nineteenth century to remain true to Molière.

"'It can be no great disappointment to you, whom all other ladies love,' she said gently,

'when I tell you that I love Molière, and no other.'

"'But he is only a genius, who exists to please his patron.'

"'I beg pardon,' Winnie replied; 'you are only a patron, whose only reason for being is that you may foster genius.'

"'That is not the seventeenth-century way of looking at it,' Fouquet replied, quite puzzled. 'No one is faithful to lover or friend when he can be made footstool to a high position. But let us leave this question, which is really aside from the matter. Here is the most delightful paradise in France, and a noble who hopes soon to be minister; they are yours, if you will give up this strolling actor and playwright.'

"Winnie turned indignantly from him. There on the steps of the terrace stood her lover, looking for her. She ran to him, seized him by the arm, and begged him passionately to leave the château. 'Nothing can induce me to spend the night under its roof,' she insisted. 'Let us go to the miller of Vaux—his mill cannot be far distant; Jacqueline will take us in.'

"'The miller and Jacqueline are homeless vagrants,' Molière replied. 'The villages of

that smiling valley were razed to create these gardens; the river which brought the miller and the villagers prosperity has been appropriated to give water-power to the fountains.'

"'How can that man expect mercy, when he gave none?' Winnie cried.

"'Mercy, faith, constancy!' repeated Molière, 'they are not in the spirit of the times. To succeed now one must be cruel, hypocritical, selfish, base. It is the century of wolves and foxes, hyenas and tigers. One must truckle, steal, tyrannize, be false to every pledge of honor and affection.'

"Winnie burst into tears. 'Then, if there is no refuge for us anywhere in the world in this century, let us quit the time itself with which we have so little in sympathy.'

"Molière looked at her wonderingly, tenderly, as she took from the gold *bonbonnière* the tear of the aloe, and moistening it with her own tears, gently touched first his eyelids and then her own.

"Slowly, softly, as on a murmurous river, she drifted away. She had wept, indeed, but she had left the scene before the worst—before Louis XIV. despoiled the man who had wrecked his

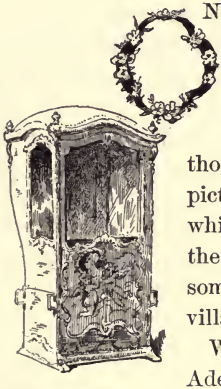
fortune to give him pleasure, and throwing him into the Bastile, to linger for the rest of his life in wretchedness, unscrupulously appropriated his wealth, his ideas, his friends, to build Versailles.

"She had left the scene before Molière, having learned the vanity, the hypocrisy, the greed and cruelty of greatness, grew bitter, and wrote the stinging satires which held up the period to the scorn of the world, and before Armande, his beloved wife, broke his trusting heart.

"But she had seen enough of the spirit of the seventeenth century, and as she felt her life budding with the flower of the aloe, and about to bloom in another period, she was glad that she was to escape to any century, even if it were to prove the nineteenth, with Adelaide reading a prosy story under the light of the old student lamp."

INTERLUDE

(BETWEEN CHAPTERS III. AND IV.)



ONE day, when Winnie was at the museum of royal carriages, sketching a gorgeous Louis XIV. State coach, which she thought she might use in a picture that she had dreamed while Adelaide was reading the story of the Fête at Vaux, some one called at the little villa.

When she heard his voice, Adelaide, dignified Adelaide, sprang up, overturning a bottle of drawing-ink on a careful elevation of the façade of the Little Trianon, and allowing the inky pools to widen and to blot out her neat work, while she caught the newcomer by both hands and danced him gayly around the room ;

for it was her old friend and Winnie's lover, Van, and Adelaide knew by the look in his face that all his doubts had been cleared away, and he had come back to win his pardon from Winnie.

"Where is she?" he asked, when Adelaide allowed him to catch his breath, and Adelaide showed him the way to the museum.

Winnie had been painting one of the pompous chariots covered with bronze ornamentation, the panels rich paintings, the trappings and linings of crimson velvet richly embroidered in gold. The guardian had left her for an instant, for he heard a strange step approaching, and Winnie recognized a familiar voice, which inquired if a *demoiselle Americaine* were not painting somewhere in the museum.

A strange tremor of delight and fear thrilled her, at the same time a wilful impulse to flee and to hide from him. She laid her palette and brushes silently down. There was no escape, for he was coming toward her from the only door; but he had not yet perceived her, and Winnie seized the door of the magnificent State coach. It was firmly fastened. Behind her was an exquisite *chaise à porteurs* of the

time of Louis XV. The panels were decorated with cupids by Boucher, and mounted in ornate carving and gilding. The interior was lined with velvet. It was a veritable jewel-box, not to be touched by unhallowed hands; but she forgot all the respect in which this almost sacred object was held in her wild desire to hide. She tried the door, it yielded, and in an instant she was inside.

"*C'est bien étrange,*" said the guardian, "and *cependant,* she was here a moment ago. *Tiens*, here are her little affairs," and Winnie knew that he was showing her sketch to Van. "'Not of much consequence?' No, monsieur, the lady is not a great artist—ladies never are; but painting amuses them, it keeps them out of mischief, and, *en fin*, it is no crime."

"I have seen some paintings that were crimes," Van replied, "of the very deepest dye."

"But, yes; but they were made by men, monsieur. A lady is not capable of anything great, not even of a great crime."

Winnie could scarcely contain her indignation. The man had been so complimentary to her that very morning, and had called her

sketch "*un vrai chef d'œuvre;*" but men were all alike, she never would believe one of them again. In her indignation she rustled just the least bit, and Van gave a start which she did not see.

"I think, as the young lady has left her painting materials, she will probably be back soon," he said. "May I wait for her here?" and Van pressed a coin into the hand of the guardian.

"Certainly, sir; wait as long as you like."

"And you need not bother to stay, you know. It must be near your luncheon hour. I'll look after things for you."

But the guardian was faithful to his duty, though sorely tempted.

"Pardon, monsieur, *mais c'est impossible.* It would be against my orders to leave you here alone. Monsieur has the air of a gentleman; monsieur *is* an honorable gentleman. I recognize that; but Pierre, the former guardian, did not have the same penetration of character which I possess, and he allowed a man to remain alone for five minutes here, and in that five minutes he had cut out a panel of Watteau's, and ripped all the gold lace from the

lining of the coach of Louis XVI. He tied the panel over his stomach under his vest with the lace, but fortunately the vest was a tight fit, and a bit of the lace stuck out. Ah! it lay heavy on his stomach, that panel. But though the stranger was arrested and the stolen articles replaced, his politeness cost Pierre his position, and that is why I am here instead of him. Since that unfortunate occurrence, monsieur, the guardians of Versailles are forbidden to be polite, even when, as in the present instance, there is no danger. There was another case, that of a woman, monsieur. I will not call her a lady. She had an insane desire to sit in the grand coach of the *sacré*. She offered me a bribe of I will not say how much. It was not sufficient—I am thankful, it was not sufficient, and my virtue remained unassailable. Sit in that coach, monsieur! Think of the consequences! They would have been fatal."

"How so? It looks pretty strong. Was the lady so heavy that you feared the consequences to the rusted springs and decayed flooring of the old coach?"

"Heavy, monsieur! She was as thin as a soup

à l'oseille in Lent. *She* would not have been fatal to the coach. It is upon me that the fatality would have precipitated itself, and upon her likewise."

"Upon her? Oh, I see; it is pretty dusty inside, and the microbes are doubtless rather hungry after their fast of a century. Let me remember, it was in a *chaise à porteurs*, was it not, that Mesdames de France left the palace after nursing Louis XV. when he died of small-pox?"

"I do not know, monsieur. I never heard."

"Oh, yes, you have," and again a franc stole into the man's hand as he whispered, "Let this refresh your memory. You certainly can tell me which of these sedan chairs dates from the time of Louis XV."

"That one, monsieur, with the panels by Boucher has always been called the *chaise à porteurs de Madame Pompadour*."

"Exactly; and when Madame Pompadour died Louis took back his presents, of course; and being of an economical turn of mind, gave that chair to his daughters. Or, perhaps, the marquise left it to them in her will. Has it ever been relined?"

"No, monsieur, it is all authentic; quite of the period, I assure you."

"Even to the microbes, I presume."

"Undoubtedly, monsieur."

"And you have never fumigated it?"

"Never, monsieur. A gentleman did attempt to light a cigar here, but though he had tried to bribe me, the sum fortunately was not enough to tempt my virtue—and—"

"And consequently that *chaise à porteurs* is a death-breeding piece of furniture, sir. What do the statistics say? How many visitors annually die of small-pox after visiting this museum?"

But Winnie could stand it no longer. She threw open the door, laughing heartily. "Oh, Van, Van, what a rascal you are!"

He sprang to her side, and in spite of the presence of the astonished guardian, would have caught her in his arms; but Winnie glided adroitly from him. "Beware of the microbes!" she exclaimed. "I'm infected, you know," and she laughed again, not mockingly, but with a kindly twinkle in her dancing eyes.

"You know I'd consider it a privilege to take the small-pox from you, Winnie," Van

asserted, gayly gathering up her belongings; but the guardian, seeing these preparations for departure, bristled with authority.

"But she has been in the *chaise à porteurs!* Monsieur, the consequences will be fatal."

"Make yourself easy, my friend, I've no picture strapped on my stomach; on the contrary, quite a weight has just been lifted from my mind; and as for this young lady, I trust she will escape with her life. Judging from her influence over other living organisms, I believe she could hypnotize even microbes."

"But me—my honor!"

"You remarked that the sum which the other lady offered you for the privilege of sitting in Louis' band-wagon was not sufficient to tempt your virtue. At this rate a seat in your old *chaise* is almost as expensive as one in a stage-box on a first night at the opera, but if that will do the consequences need not be very fatal to anybody."

Mr. Van Silver remained at Versailles but a short time. Important business complications, in which his mother's and his own property were involved, recalled them both to the United States.

"It is the irony of fate," he said, "that while I was free to spend my vacation in any part of Europe this absurd misunderstanding should have come up between us, and I should have wasted my time rambling around in the Orient when I might have been right here; and now that everything is explained, the 'total depravity of inanimate things,' together with what another wordy philosopher has denominated the inapproposity and unscrupulosity of contemporaneous events, compels me to return to America."

"Never mind," said Winnie, "it's all right, and absence and waiting and that sort of thing are nothing when people understand each other."

"Aren't they?" Van asked sardonically. "Now it's my experience that the better they understand one another the more those little nothings count."

And so Van flitted into their lives and out again, but he left a gleam of sunshine for them all. Winnie was her old, merry self once more, and though life went on in just the same lines, a new element of content was recognizable, and absence and waiting were no longer unendurable.

Adelaide's scheme for recording the results of their studies in short stories was continued, and Winnie herself took an active interest in it.

"Let us have another peep at the Louis XIV. period," she begged. "You went to Chantilly with Mrs. Van Silver on that famous coaching party last year. Do bring that château into your next story, and then I will take my turn, and see what pressed flowers of romance I can find between the musty leaves of history."

Mrs. Van Silver gave the girls a little dinner at her apartment at the Hôtel Vatel before leaving for America. She had been told of their literary amusement, and asked that the next paper might be read at her rooms. "I am very fond of this little hotel," she said to Adelaide; "its table is so good that it would have been no dishonor to the man whose name the hotel bears. Can you not make us understand how a cook could make the merest detail in his humble profession a point of honor?"

How Adelaide succeeded in combining Mrs. Van Silver's and Winnie's requests will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCE'S COOK AND THE KING'S GARDENER.

VATEL and La Quintinie, two of Fouquet's servants, were quarrelling over the merits of their respective callings.

"Vatel was the cook, an excitable man with flashing eyes, black as coals, under his white cap. He flourished a long ladle, and blustered angrily at the good-natured, plump, and easy gardener. 'Son of a turnip! don't you see there is no comparison between our professions? You cater to the nose, I to the mouth. Tell me, which is the nobler organ? My lady sniffs at your rose, places it in her corsage. It tumbles out, she treads upon it, and it is for-

gotten ; but my lord sits down to his soup, and the fortunes of the nation hang in the balance. If it is palatable, my lord is happy, and the weightiest affairs move off prosperously ; if it is burnt, my lord is angry, and he vents his anger in the councils of the State. Do they not say that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach ? It is only a half-truth ; it is the way to his brain, to his moral nature. Flowers ! what are they ? Spots of color, useless trash, which we can do without very well, but can man do without eating ? Tell me that.'

"La Quintinie, the gardener, laughed. 'You forget that I minister to the mouth quite as much as you do. Could you get up a dinner without my vegetables and fruits ? Have I not made the reputation of your dinners by my green peas out of season ? No one knows the secret of their production, or that I imported some of the little glass houses from Holland in which to grow them. I have kept a high wall around that part of my potager, with the gate always locked. I showed the invention to you in a moment of confidence, when you were troubled as to what new surprise to serve at the banquet in the very early spring. The

guests thought the peas were brought from Africa. They did not know that they grew yonder behind the stables. What would your banquet have been without them, I ask?'

"'True, true,' replied Vatel, somewhat mollified, 'they were the masterpiece of the *menu;* but then, again, could my master and his guests have eaten them raw? Was it not the delicious way in which I served them which gave them their exquisite flavor? There you are, simply the purveyor of the gross products of the earth, while I give them that touch of art through my genius. Genius, I say. Does it take genius to plant peas? But who can cook them without it?'

"'Your skull is as thick as though you wore one of your copper saucepans under your nightcap. Did it not require genius to invent the glass houses, to force the vegetables out of season, contrary to nature, thus commanding the tropics? Do I need your help to make my strawberries gustable? Can you make one of your famous sauces without a bouquet from my garden of herbs? And as for my flowers, more hearts have been broken and mended by the gift of a rose from a fair lady's hand, yes,

and battles fought, than ever trembled in the scale against your soup-kettle.'

"'Wind up that spit, you rogue!' exclaimed Vatel, turning to the first kitchen boy; 'the mutton is burning, and this reminds me of another argument in my favor. Surely that profession is noblest which is ministered to by the greatest number of others. Not only do you bring me your masterpieces that I may give them a worthy presentation through my skill, but so do all the other leading occupations of the world. The *curé* said well, "All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the belly is not filled." Why do fishermen tempt the dangers of the seas? Why do butchers pursue their sanguinary and disgusting trade? Why do shepherds guard their sheep from the wolf and the robber? Why does the farmer till the soil, the miller grind, the peasant tread the grapes, the vintner bottle his wine? Why do slaves toil in the sugar plantations, or ships sail the seas with the spices of the Orient? Why does the king himself and his courtiers hunt in the forest? I tell you it is to serve *me*, to give the cook an opportunity to display his artistic ability. The cook has al-

ways been called an artist, but the gardener—humph! Go back to your potager; the dung-hill fork is not to be compared with the ladle.'

"'Listen, product of a bake-oven,' retorted La Quintinie, 'you have but demonstrated the weakness of your position. When one hangs by a long chain, the more links there are in it the more chances of one's downfall should one of them give way. That man is surest of success who depends only upon his own efforts, he can at least count on the loyalty and fidelity of his servitor. The more one is ministered to the more dependent one is.'

"'Treason, treason and heresy!' shrieked Vatel. 'Carry that theory further, and you make the Pope, who is served by all, the weakest of men; and the king, who is supported by us all, stands in the most dangerous position.'

"'I did not say so, I did not even think so,' said La Quintinie, aghast at such ideas. He could not answer Vatel's arguments with the same rush of eloquence. He could only rise heavily and amble slowly away, shaking his head quite unconvinced. He turned at the door, however, and said: 'I could pay you back for this by refusing you the fruits you

wish for the grand banquet which the intendant is to give to the king and the court.'

"'Surely you will not do this,' Vatel replied, turning quite pale.

"'No, I will not do it, for the blame would fall on me. I will do my very best instead, and we will see after the banquet who is advanced to the highest place of honor; and, meantime, beware lest one of your links break.'

"The result of the festival has already been told. Fouquet lost all but his life, but his servants were brought into prominence and received new positions of distinction. Louis XIV. did not scruple to take many of them into his own employ, profiting by Fouquet's admirable sagacity in discovering genius.

"La Quintinie was made gardener of Versailles under Le Notre, who was landscape architect. They worked together admirably, Le Notre planning and laying out the grounds, and La Quintinie filling them with beauty. Le Notre gave him a great swamp, which he transformed into a vegetable garden and orchard. His specialty was the training of fruit-trees against walls in the Italian method and the introduc-

tion of hot-houses. Such luscious pears, such asparagus, out of season, had never been known before in France; strawberries, too, and French peas when the ground was covered with snow. The court physician complained that La Quintinie made them so tempting that the king overate continually, even rising in the middle of the night for a *petit souper* of green peas and strawberries. La Quintinie introduced the fig into France, cultivated the coffee plant and the banana, and imported orange and lemon trees from Italy by the thousand. It is true that the first batch were all winter-killed, from having been planted in the open ground, but the green boxes which are such a familiar feature in all French gardens were introduced the next season, and the orange-tree had come to stay. Mansart built the noble orangery with its magnificent twin flights of staircases for La Quintinie's pets, and La Fontaine wrote them a poem,* and La Quintinie himself wrote a treatise on gardening. These were among his

* "Orangers, arbres que j'adore,
Que vos parfums me semblent doux.
Est il dans l'empire de Flore
Rien d'agreable comme vous?

most enduring honors, but the most brilliant one at that time was one of the many fêtes given by the king in imitation of that at Vaux. In this fête fruits were used as decorations of the various bosquets. There were pyramids of slices of melon, pineapples, grapes, and other fruits, forming magnificent studies in still-life. There were arcades of fruit-trees in pots laden with oranges, cherries, plums, apricots, figs, etc. There were festoons of fruit arranged against the thick green walls of the hedges. Gold services on gilded tables were filled with tempting arrangements of luscious berries, ready and crying to be eaten. There were processions of men dressed as savages, bearing upon their heads great silver salvers piled with tropical varieties. It was a fruit festival which would have driven wild the manager of a California horticultural fair. And La Quintinie, in

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Vos fleurs ont embaumé tout l'air que je respire.
Toujour un aimable zephire
Autour de vous se va jouant,
Vous êtes nains, mais tel arbre geant
Qui declaire au soleil la guerre
Ne vous vont pas,
Bien qu'il couvre un arpent de terre
Avec ses bras."

the guise of Bacchus crowned with vine-wreaths, was brought in and presented to the king.

"In the mean time Vatel had also had his successes. Fouquet's downfall occurred just after the recall to favor of the Prince de Condé. Louis II. of Bourbon—*le Grand Condé* as he was called—was the haughtiest and most selfish man of his time. Without faith, patriotism, or honor, he had been a traitor to his country and his king, but there was one person to whom he was passionately devoted, and for whose glory he would have sacrificed any principle and any friend. This person was himself. Next to the Duke of Orleans he was recognized as the highest personage in the State, and aided by his powerful sister, the Duchesse de Longueville, and his brother, the Prince de Conti, he was a formidable foe and a dangerous friend. Though he had taken arms frequently against France, Louis XIV. considered him too powerful not to endeavor to placate, and recalled him from Spain to give him the command of the French forces in the Netherlands. At length, disabled by the gout, he resigned his post. When he sought an audience with Louis

in order to hand in his resignation, the king so far forgot etiquette as to come to the top of the marble staircase to meet him.

"Condé mounted painfully, and the king bade him courteously not to hasten. 'One must walk slowly, my cousin,' he said, 'when one is encumbered with such a weight of laurels as you carry.'

"Notwithstanding this polite compliment, the king must have felt relieved that Condé's fighting days were over, and that he was now about to retire for the remainder of his life to his beautiful château of Chantilly. To keep him interested there, Louis allowed Le Notre to make over the grounds in the style of Versailles. Condé was a man of taste, and the transformation was a continual delight to him. Le Notre laid out new basins of water, allowing the little river Nonnette to sweep through the grounds. He cut numerous roads through the forest, and had parterres of flowers planted, and terraces constructed adorned with statuary. Much of this beauty remains to the present day. The hamlet was built before that of the Trianon, and suggested the idea of a toy village to Marie Antoinette. The stables for two hundred and

forty horses were built later, but the prince kept a large stud at this time. He enlarged and refurnished the château and entertained lavishly, and the king encouraged him in this. 'It will take his mind off of politics,' he said sagaciously. He saw with complacency the prince interest himself in the very matters which had excited his anger in Fouquet. He soon suggested his giving a fête. 'Why do you never invite me to Chantilly?' he asked.

"Condé had taken Vatel into his employ as superintendent of his house on the fall of Fouquet, and he now consulted with him. 'Can you outrival yourself, can you surpass the banquet which you prepared for Fouquet?'

"And Vatel, believing that he saw here the opportunity of his life, readily promised to do this, and the king and his court, consisting of over six hundred persons, were invited to Chantilly. They were to remain over night, and Vatel was now not simply the head cook, but as major-domo he had to plan the entire entertainment of this army of guests. Every bed, stool, and candlestick was to be provided by him, with the lodging of the horses and servants. It was necessary also to cater for four

meals, all of which must be royal entertainments, and this far from markets and with no magician gardener like La Quintinie at his elbow. The illumination of the grounds, the programme of pleasures for the guests, the securing of extra servants, musicians, etc., were also entrusted to his care. He had a thousand things to think of at once. For twelve nights before the fête he had scarcely slept. He planned a hunt by torchlight for the night of the arrival, the ladies to follow the game in their carriages, the many intersecting roads cut through the park rendering this possible, while the dogs and the beaters dashed through the thickets and drove the deer into the long avenues. Madame de Sévigné describes this hunt as one of the most exciting and novel experiences of her life. She sat in an open calash (a vehicle resembling a modern hansom); two torch-bearers ran at her side; gay cavaliers dashed by her; there were cries in the thickets, a flash of lights, and a shadowy form, a magnificent buck with branching horns, bounded into the avenue just ahead of her. Her horse, which must have been a hunter, took the bit in his teeth and dashed after it. There were dogs

leaping about her carriage-wheels. Some one was sounding a hunting-horn, a cavalier flew by, there were shots, the buck bounded into the air, and madame was 'in at the death.'

"It was an exciting experience, and the guests sat down with whetted appetites to a magnificent supper. During the repast Condé sent a servant to congratulate Vatel on his success. The poor man was overwrought—one of the courses did not quite hold out, and could not be served at one of the tables. It was the table at which the nobles of the very lowest rank were seated, but for this very reason they were jealous of any slight. Vatel had a hundred annoyances, a thousand cares. The prince had caused the parterres to be filled with flowering bulbs from Holland, and these gaudy and rare flowers excited the admiration of the guests, as it seemed to Vatel, more than the banquet. They reminded him of La Quintinie and his warning, 'Beware that none of your links break!'

"'Ah, that man is well waited upon who is served only by himself!' he groaned. 'My honor, my fame is at stake, and depends on every scullion in the château.'

"A display of fireworks on the canal followed the supper. It lasted late, but every guest had retired at last, comfortably provided for for the night. The servants had cleared the tables and slept. Only Vatel still puzzled over his breakfast *menu*, and the more important one of the noonday collation, the great banquet of the festival. He visited the store-rooms, the butteries, the pantries, and saw with satisfaction that the smoking ovens of the past week had filled the shelves. Quarters of beef, haunches of venison, hecatombs of dressed fowls, whole butcher-shops and pastry-cook's windows, with processions of cakes decorated to the last degree of the confectioner's art, vats of marmalade, tuns of wine—everything stood in readiness like a well-armored arsenal on the eve of a siege—everything but the fish, and that would come in a few hours; he had written to the principal ports of France. There would be salmon from Marseilles, sole from Normandy, crates of eels from Brittany. The ingredients for the sauces were ready to the last lemon. It was daybreak; surely he might catch a wink of sleep before breakfast. His brain was shrivelled with insomnia, his nerves unstrung, his

eyes baked in their sockets. He wakened the servants and set them about the breakfast. He would wait only the arrival of the fish for the midday dinner, and then would give up the helm, secure of his victory.

"'Maître Vatel, the fish has arrived,' said the steward, and the major-domo descended to the kitchen door. Where was the long line of carriers with pannier-laden beasts? Only a boy with a single crate containing an insignificant number.

"'Are we in the days of the miracles?' asked Vatel. 'Where are the others?'

"'Please you, sir, these are all.'

"'And the messengers to Fécamp and St. Malo?'

"'They have not returned, but the weather has been unfavorable for fishing up to yesterday; doubtless the fish will arrive to-morrow.'

"'To-morrow!' Vatel laughed mockingly at his own despair. 'And whoever heard of serving a dinner to the king without fish! I am disgraced forever!'

"He retired to his chamber, and breakfast was served in the great hall of the château. In the midst of it a clatter of hoofs was heard. It was

the train of mules from Normandy, laden with panniers of fish. While the kitchen boys were unloading them more fish poured in from Brittany, from Paris; one would think that the château was to be victualled for Lent. 'Run and tell Vatel,' said the steward; 'this will be a merry sight for him. He will feast his eyes on this abundance, and it will do him more good than to feast his stomach, though he has eaten nothing for days.'

"They knocked at his door; only a faint groan for answer. They burst it open, and found him dying, thrust through by his own sword. One of his links had broken.

"The news of his suicide was reported at the breakfast-table, much to the annoyance of the princely host. 'It was such an *awkward* thing,' says Madame de Sévigné, 'to have happened at so expensive and elegant a fête.'"

Adelaide laid down her paper amid applause.

"Did you really find that amulet in the sarcophagus of Solomon's Egyptian wife?" Tib asked of Van, after Adelaide's transformation scheme had been explained.

"It really came from a tomb in Egypt," he

replied. "Adelaide's fancy may have been true; who knows? At any rate, I hope tears may be kept from your eyes until we meet again."

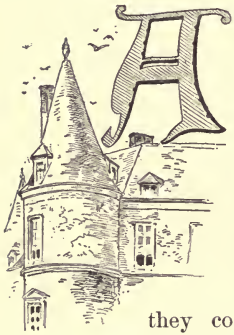
"And in the mean time," said Winnie, "this living in the past is a very good thing. I mean to shorten dull days by not only looking backward, but by stepping backward now and then."

"I trust, dear, that it may not make you discontented with your own century," said Mrs. Van Silver.

Winnie made no answer then and there, but as Van walked homeward with her through the long *allées* of the palace garden he understood that these flights of fancy into the dim chambers of the past were only contrivances to shorten the waiting time, and that her heart was fixed, not in the past of the Old World, but in the future and in the New.

CHAPTER V.

AN EXCURSION TO RAMBOUILLET.



ABOUT the middle of the summer the girls decided to make a little excursion to visit the Châteaux of Rambouillet and Maintenon, situated to the south of Versailles. They found, by a consultation of time-tables, that they could spend the night at the little town of Rambouillet, go on in the early morning to Maintenon, lunch there, and return to Versailles in the evening. It was a short trip, but one which would give them two historic châteaux, full of interest to the student of the Louis XIV. period.

At Rambouillet they stopped at a rambling

old inn called the *Lion d'Or*. The walls of the courtyard were tapestried with Maréchal Niel roses, great golden balls, and the innkeeper, on hearing Winnie's exclamations of delight, mounted a ladder to pluck a bouquet for her. It was with difficulty that he could be restrained from stripping the entire wall of its golden splendors. It was an inn to dream in and to lose one's self in, with its staircases winding about, linking the irregular floors, and making the guest wander through long stretches of unnecessary corridors to reach a point directly beneath.

The regular dining-room was engaged by a hilarious military party, and a table was set for our travellers in a tiny boudoir opening by a glass door upon the rose-draped court.

They sat here and ate a delicious luncheon—all the dishes, from the trout, the partridge with mushrooms, and the tiny wood strawberries wet with Burgundy, had come from the forest of Rambouillet; but they did not linger long over the repast, for they wanted the entire afternoon for the château.

Fortunately the inn was quite near the castle park, and a short walk through the narrow, cobble-stoned streets brought them to the grille

of ironwork, and they entered the old building. The façade facing the town was not pretentious, and the girls were a little disappointed, but as they wandered from room to room, and admired the wonderful wood-carving with which the interior is decorated, and looked out from the broad windows on the beautiful park, their delight grew with each new discovery.

"No one but Le Notre could have planned that charming vista!" Adelaide exclaimed. "It is quite unnecessary for the guide-book to tell us that he laid out that grand canal. It is as evidently his as if he had signed his name to it."

Winnie laughed. "Signing one's name to a canal does seem something like having it 'writ in water,' does it not? But I know what you mean. Those mushrooms we had this morning were so good that I was sure they had Julie d'Angenne's monogram embroidered all over them."

"I don't see what mushrooms have to do with Julie d'Angenne," remarked Tib, the practical.

"Don't you? Well, then, allow me to say that your education in French history is deficient."

"Did you ever happen to hear of the young lady in question?"

"Certainly; she was the daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet, who was so famous for founding the literary coterie of the Hôtel de Rambouillet in Paris. The marquise frequently invited her literary friends to visit here, and they acted sylvan plays on the Isle du Rocher over yonder. How charming it must have been! The audience sat on the bank of the canal, while nymphs and shepherds appeared from behind the bowlders and recited their parts. How I wish Adelaide's little fiction about the tear of the aloe were true; and I would wish myself back to one of these garden parties. Think who the other guests were —Corneille, Balzac, Cardinal Richelieu, the grand Condé, Boileau, Bossuet, Voiture, Madame de Longueville, Angélique Paulet, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Madame de Sévigné, Racine, Molière. Only imagine that it is one of the *fêtes champêtres* of the Marquise de Rambouillet in sixteen fifty something, and that we have all this witty and learned society here with us."

"Yes, let us imagine it," said Winnie. "I'll

sit over there beside the canal and think and scribble it all out while you girls visit the dairy with the marble floor and tables, and the hermitage with the beautiful frescoes."

Winnie rambled down the grand avenue of Louisiana cypresses, which has its match nowhere else in Europe. The great cypress knees formed inviting arm-chairs, and the soft, fern-like foliage waved from its long, pendulous branches. The brilliant parterres of flowers were reflected a shade lower in tone in the unruffled mirror of the canal, which zigzagged through the tranquil forest. The stillness was only occasionally broken by the cry of a bird; the only human being in sight was a gray-haired man patiently fishing at the foot of a headless sphinx, and apparently as motionless and as moss-grown as the statue.

As Winnie scribbled, it almost seemed to her that the transformation which she dreamed had come true. A stately but courteous and very lovely woman was talking to her of a house party to which they had invited their Parisian friends. "And, Julie," she said, "I want this fête to be especially delightful, for you know the king and Madame de Maintenon will

drive over from madame's château at Maintenon. They say it is very beautiful, but the grounds cannot eclipse ours, nor royalty even collect a more distinguished literary coterie than our guests. I want to have the play a great success, for the king is fond of spectacles, and so is madame, though she is such a prude, but everything must be unexceptionable. We can have no ballet, and the costumes must not be too closely imitated from the antique. Our nymphs must drape themselves with excessive care. I had thought of engaging Molière to arrange it all, but we cannot trust to him."

"No, mamma," replied Winnie—or Julie, as she now imagined herself to be—"Molière is far too amusing. Get the Abbé Arnauld to arrange us something very classical. 'Sophonisbe and Scipio' will be just the thing. We will invite Angélique Paulet, whose beautiful red hair has earned her the name of *la belle lionne*, to take the principal part."

"Mademoiselle may have a part and play upon her lute and sing, but you, Julie, are to be Sophonisbe, for my little daughter shall not be cast in the shade on this particular occasion. The young Comte de Guiche and the Duc de

Montausier are both coming, and I am desirous that you should appear to advantage."

The fair Julie shrugged her shoulders and blushed, and the marquise regarded her critically, knowing that the blush was for one of the aspirants to her daughter's hand, and the shrug for the other.

"We must have a series of surprises," she continued. "A fête is always wearisome where everything proceeds after a cut-and-dried programme. When the king and Madame de Maintenon arrive we will meet them with a procession of the prettiest girls of the village, dressed in white, and bearing blossoming boughs and singing songs, and Maître Claude (*concierge* of the château) shall have orders to fire a salute from the cannon in the two towers."

"Maître Claude has grown so pompous," said Julie, "that I fear he will not conduct himself with proper respect even before the king. When the priest brought the *pain bénit* the other day a little late and told him that he was sorry to have kept you waiting, but he had been called to the death-bed of one of your people, Maître Claude refused to receive the bread, saying that the peasant was lacking in

respect not to have put off his dying until Madame la Marquise was served."

"Maître Claude will have to be warned; but have you no suggestions for the entertainment of our guests?"

"You might have a sermon preached for Madame de Maintenon."

"The very thing. You are in jest, but I shall ask Bossuet to come and preach in the château chapel the morning after the fête."

Julie pursed her lips. "I trust he will restrain his eloquence within proper bounds. Do you remember, when he was a boy of seventeen he improvised a sermon at one of the literary evenings in your *salon bleu*, and preached half the night? Monsieur Voiture said he had never heard any one preach at the same time so early and so late."

"No matter, Julie, I particularly request that all of our guests be present at the chapel service, and if any one is desirous of my favor, he must not miss it."

Julie made a mental memorandum of this remark. "I shall manage so that the Comte de Guiche shall not be there, for mamma thinks too much of the tiresome fellow as it is; but

how can I make the Duc de Montausier get up early enough? The last time he was here he sat up half the night writing verses to me, and such poor poetry, too; and he overslept the next morning, so that he missed a hunting party."

The marquise was still thoughtful. "The Comte de Guiche is a fine young man," she said musingly; "so punctilious in matters of etiquette. He always dresses in perfect taste, and in a manner befitting every occasion; and then he is so brave. Death has no terrors for him. It is remarkable to see one so young so well prepared for every exigency of life. The Duc de Montausier has a kind heart and many honors, but I fear he is not accustomed to literary society such as ours. A man is known by the company he keeps, and I fear the duke's friends would hardly do us honor. However, it is some years since we have seen him, and his tastes may have changed. In the letter in which he accepts my invitation he writes that he has been travelling in Savoy, and speaks of the beauty of the rocky cascades and waterfalls. 'At Rambouillet,' he says, 'you have a tranquil beauty in your broad, flat meadows and

lake-like expanses of unrippled water, but I fancy you must find it a little monotonous, and must miss the joyous gurgle and plash of fountains and waterfalls.' "

"That is like Charles," Julie replied, with a little pique. "He dearly loves to affect the superior, and to patronize me. I cannot endure it."

"I have an idea," said the marquise. "I will send a messenger in haste to Vaux, and ask the intendant to lend me his chief *fontanier* for a few days. There is high ground in the pheasant park. We might construct a tank there, have the water pumped into it from the river, and obtain the most delightful results. We will keep it a complete secret until the proper moment."

For the next week all was bustle about the château. A major-domo and pastry-cook came from Paris with a staff of waiters, the Abbé Arnauld and the actors for the little play came early and rehearsed every day. There were musicians and extra gardeners and dressmakers, and a new army of stable-boys to care for the horses of the expected guests, and a dancing-master to arrange the quadrilles. But though

the marquise had much to arrange in order to lodge and cater for her guests, her chief care was for their mental entertainment. Le Notre, the great landscape gardener, arrived late, but he entered into the plans of the marquise with enthusiasm. Fortunately he had brought his workmen and materials with him, and they set to work at once upon the cascade in the park. The water was conducted a long distance in a great pipe, which was finally concealed in the branches of an oak growing on the summit of the cliff. Here the water burst forth as though from the heart of the tree itself, and fell in a graceful waterfall into a basin half-way down the rocky declivity, from each side of which it issued in two cascades, meeting at the foot in a broad pool with marble coping, flanked by two fountains of extraordinary height for that period. It was a beautiful bit of work of its kind, and effected almost by magic. The evening before the fête it was far from finished, but the marquise ordered her people to attend the workmen with flambeaux. They worked all night, and in the morning everything was completed.

The Duc de Montausier arrived the night

that the work was in progress, and looking from the château windows exclaimed: "What, you have a fête to-night in the park; it is all illuminated! What a delightful surprise!"

"Is it not?" Julie replied demurely. "It is a firefly dance which mother has arranged, but you are not to go out into the park. You get the effect best from the windows."

The duke watched it, admiring the lines and figures of light changing and reflected in the quiet water of the canal, without suspecting that the lights were anything more than a pageant arranged for the diversion of the guests. To add to this effect and to disguise the noises of the workmen, the marquise had stationed her musicians in a boat in the centre of the canal, where, among swaying lanterns, they played and sang Venetian serenades.

"I have a surprise for your mother, Julie," he said, as they stood together alone for a moment; "a book of poems composed especially for this occasion. When shall I present it?"

"Oh, not until after to-morrow; the fête will fill all our minds, and mamma and I could not give your poems the least consideration."

"Then I shall wait until you can tell me of an auspicious moment, for I want very much to please both your mother and yourself."

"The auspicious moment for presenting your verses will be just before chapel the morning after our fête."

"Why *before* chapel?" asked the duke.

"Because it is then that mamma makes her plans for the day, and it is the only hour at which you would find her disengaged and not surrounded by her other guests. Besides, she has a great admiration for early risers."

"But your honored mother knows that I am not fond of early rising."

"So much the better. She will think that you have made a special effort to hear the Bishop of Meaux preach, and almost any poems read after a sermon would certainly seem interesting by contrast."

Although Julie sincerely wished to have the Duc de Montausier stand well in her mother's good opinion, her inborn love of teasing could not forbear this fling at his literary pretensions. Out of pure wilfulness the next day she chatted and laughed with the Comte de Guiche, a young fop excessively fond of fash-

Madame de Maintenon.

ionable clothing and a braggart of courage, which Julie suspected he did possess. When she acted her part in the pastoral in the prettily arranged out-of-doors theatre, it was not to the king or to Madame de Maintenon, enthroned in the great *fauteuils* of honor, that she directed her pretty speeches, or for them that she threw herself into the most fascinating attitudes; it was all for the Duc de Montausier, toward whom she never looked, while her heart felt his gaze of fixed admiration and beat high in her bosom, and her mischievous eyes shot demure glances at the Comte de Guiche, who imagined himself highly favored.

After the play and the collation the marquise proposed a stroll in the park, herself conducting the royal party, and requesting Julie to show the Duc de Montausier "some of the commonplace views of their too monotonous scenery."

"It will be very stupid after your travels, I fear," Julie remarked apologetically, as she led him in the direction of the fountains. "What did you find in your journey which interested you most?" she asked, not giving him time to reply to her first sally.

"Flowers," he replied, "and of them I have made a garland which, with your mother's permission, I will present you to-morrow, though I would rather have laid it at your feet at the conclusion of the play in which you acted so admirably."

Julie pouted. "Flowers are so perishable," she said, "and people always give me flowers. Why is it they never give young girls jewels, which are enduring? One must wait for those till one is old and ugly—so ugly that the jewels only attract attention to one's wrinkles; so old that one must soon give them to one's heirs."

"The flowers I have brought you are imperishable," the duke began; then catching the sound of falling waters, he stopped in amazement. "What do I hear?" he asked. "You have only flat lands at Rambouillet, and a sleepy river that scarcely ripples as it flows. How have you imitated the rush of a waterfall?"

Julie's eyes danced with merriment as she led him around a thicket and into the open space where the other guests were already admiring the artificial cascade. That of St. Cloud had not yet been constructed, and although the

one before them was much smaller, its novelty filled every beholder with admiration.

"I do not understand how you have managed it," the duke repeated, again and again.

"It is not necessary to understand," Julie replied. "Mamma is an enchantress; she set the fireflies to work the other night, and this is the result."

"Confess, my friend," said the marquise as she passed by, "that the waters and society of Rambouillet are not so flat and monotonous as you had thought."

"Ah, madame, you are cruel. I see you have taken offence at my thoughtless remark. How shall I ever obtain your forgiveness?"

"You have it already," she said, kindly taking his arm, and motioning Julie to accompany the Comte de Guiche as they walked back to the château. The comte was in high feather, tricked out in a mauve satin doublet embroidered in gold and studded with gems. It fitted his elegant figure to perfection, and the comte showed his vanity by attitudinizing at every step.

"Your mother tells me," he said, "that the Bishop of Meaux will preach for us at matins

to-morrow. I shall not miss the occasion. One should always dress with sobriety at church. It is a pity that I have not brought with me a black velvet suit I wore on Corpus Christi Day. However, a gray velvet slashed over violet would be suitable, would it not? I am especially anxious to please your lady mother."

Julie looked at him quizzically, racking her brain for an expedient to make him oversleep. The good wine of the château cellars might have had that effect, but the comte was temperate in drinking, though not in eating. To her delight she noticed at dinner that he ate freely of mushrooms; not that Rambouillet's mushrooms were not of the most wholesome kind, but because she saw that with all his affected bravery he turned pale when Madame de Maintenon remarked to him that she had known several cases of mushroom-poisoning.

Late in the evening, when the others were dancing, Julie stole away and bribed the valet of the Comte de Guiche to assist her in playing a practical joke upon his master.

"Give me for a few moments," she said, "his gray velvet doublet," and having received

it she proceeded to take in all the seams, so that it was tighter by a handbreadth than it had been.

"You would better change all the others also," said the valet, "for when my master finds that the gray one is too tight he will ask for them."

Julie industriously took them all in, and their owner as well, for when he retired his valet assured him that he was not looking well, and greeted him on drawing the curtains in the morning with an exclamation of horror.

"You are positively livid, my master. You are surely ill. Do not think of rising until you feel better."

"Nonsense," replied the young man, "I never felt better in my life. Bring me my gray doublet. It is almost time for chapel. and the marquise told me that she was particularly desirous that I should hear her favorite orator preach."

The valet brought the doublet. but the young man could not make it meet about him.

"Is it possible that I have swollen during the night!" he exclaimed.

"Mushrooms sometimes have that effect," replied the valet.

"Impossible, I feel no pain. Bring me another doublet—the rose one embroidered with crimson; no, that is too gay—the blue and silver."

This was found much too tight. "Give me the one I wore last night, it fitted me perfectly."

The valet had taken the precaution to alter it after his master had retired, and the young man stood aghast.

"I must be in a very dangerous condition," he mused. "Is there a doctor at the château?"

"Fagan, the king's doctor, is at Versailles. There is no doctor of any reputation nearer. Shall I send for him?"

"Yes—no. There is the chapel bell. I will go, though I drop dead on my knees. It is the best way to die surely. But I cannot go in my night-clothes. Bring me my dressing-gown. There, fasten it about me. The marquise will see that, though poisoned and in a dying condition, I dragged myself to chapel out of respect to her and to the Church."

Julie's amusement was such that she nearly

fell from her seat as she saw the comte enter the chapel in his gaudily flowered India dressing-gown. The marquise regarded him with astonishment, her eyes nearly starting from their sockets with surprise. "Has he gone mad? What disrespect to me and to this sacred place!" she murmured. But the bishop had begun his sermon, and there was no opportunity for explanations.

The eyes of the marquise were riveted upon him, however, throughout the entire service. She noticed his dishevelled hair, his wild, wandering gaze, and she grew more and more indignant as she perceived that some of the young people to whom Julie had confided the joke were laughing behind their missals. "He has been drinking," she thought; "it is the only explanation; it is disgraceful, unpardonable!"

The marquise was so much disturbed that she did not notice the absence of the Duc de Montausier, who had realized Julie's fears by oversleeping.

After the sermon was ended the marquise hurried out of chapel without allowing the comte an explanation, while Julie and the young people who were in the secret sur-

rounded him and assured him that he was looking very badly and ought to be assisted to his room. The young man began to imagine that he must be really ill, and took to his bed thoroughly frightened, beseeching that a physician might be sent for at once. The younger guests ran about to every room telling everybody of the joke, but Julie, who felt that the jest had possibly gone too far, asked the young man's valet to tell his master that the marquise had an antidote for mushroom-poisoning which she would send him. Then Julie wrote something on a sheet of paper, and sealing it, handed it to the valet, saying, "Tell the comte to follow this prescription."

The frightened dupe tore open the paper with trembling fingers and read: "'Take a pair of scissors—' Take a pair of scissors! How can I do that?"

"Read the rest," suggested the valet.

"'Take a pair of scissors and rip open the seams of your doublets.'"

When the marquise heard the entire story she upbraided the mischievous Julie for playing so serious a practical joke upon a guest, but the ruse had its effect. The young man

was so mortified that he made no proposal. Had he done so the marquise would never have listened to it favorably, for her good opinion of his punctilious etiquette in dress, as well as of his indifference to death in any form, was sadly shaken. Meantime the Duc de Montausier had presented to Julie, with her mother's permission, a most remarkable album of twenty-nine autograph poems, written by nineteen of the most celebrated poets of the day—all his personal friends. Each poem was written in praise of Julie, and compared her to a flower, which was beautifully painted by some artist of note on the opposite page. The book was of the finest vellum, and was entitled *La Guirlande de Julie.* It is spoken of as "*une des plus illustres galanteries qui aient jamais été faites.*"

This tribute gained the heart of the marquise. She was convinced not only that the duke was appreciative of literary society, but she discovered that certain of his own poems, scattered through the volume, possessed as much merit as those of the famous poets whose friendship she envied him. Julie, though she was hard to win,

"A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,"

had always in her secret heart loved Charles de Montausier, and later became his wife. The marriage was a happy one, and the *Guirlande de Julie* is still preserved by descendants of the mischievous girl for whom it was composed, while legends of her merry-pranks and of her mother's delightful garden-parties cluster about the château and its enchanting environs.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE ROSE OF VENICE.

THE next morning, after their return from Rambouillet, the postman handed Winnie a package which during her absence had arrived from America. The handwriting in which it was addressed was perfectly familiar, and she tore it open, with the remark: "Well, of all long letters!" A moment later, and she exclaimed: "Girls, what do you think? Our dream-stories are contagious; even Van has tried his hand at one. Isn't it too absurd? You know Van was greatly taken by the pastel paintings of Rosalba Carriera, that talented Venetian artist who had such an immense

vogue at the beginning of the eighteenth century. She travelled all over Europe, and was patronized by the royalty and nobility of so many countries, whose museums now preserve examples of her graceful art. She was the first to introduce pastel painting into the countries she visited. The medium was known, of course, before, but no one had handled it with such charm. Van has looked for her work in every museum that he has visited, and was especially delighted with what he found in Venice. He begins his paper with a sort of poetic rhapsody. The idea of Van's dropping into poetry!

"'TO THE PASTELS OF ROSALBA CARRIERA.

"'Floating on the Canal Grande,
How we miss the belle and dandy
Of the past!
And each stately marble palace
Seems a carven, empty chalice.
They outlast

"'All the dames of the Spinelli,
Fair Signoras Giovanelli,
They who danced
In the ball-room of Pisani,
And at Doge Giustiniani
Coyly glanced.

" ' Vanished are intrigues and menace
With the brides and maids of Venice,
In their bloom ;
And the Venice of to-day,
With its marbles, white or gay,
Is a tomb.

" ' If the past could tell its story,
Tell its dreams of love and glory,
Could it give
Back to life one fair marchesa,
Warm the dust of one contessa,
Make her live,

" ' With her pretty, courtly graces,
Powdered hair and costly laces,
Pearls in ear,
Could it show her now, as lately,
Sweet, bewitching, dainty, stately,
Charming, dear !

" ' She has wrought this, Carriera,
In her fame each is a sharer,
All are there,
In the lace the city's famed for,
And the white rose she was named for,
In their hair.

" ' In the great tomb's gloomy splendor,
On the portraits' bloom so tender,
Is but dust ;

But in tinted pastel powder
Arch the proud lips, and the prouder
Snowy bust.

" ' Still on earth their sweet charms linger,
Perfect cheek and faultless finger,
Sparkling eye,
Though in heaven they are sainted,
The fair maids Rosalba painted
Cannot die ! '

" That is all of the poetry. Our writer now dismounts from Pegasus, and continues in prose :

" There stands on the records of the great French Academy an official decision dated September 25th, 1706, to the effect that the association having learned that several demoiselles had presumed to present themselves as candidates for admission, ' the company, after having reflected seriously, resolved that no *Miss* should be received into membership,' etc. The reason for this ban is not given, but it was gravely considered and not to be lightly broken.

" But Rosalba's shining fame, which had preceded her coming, and her splendid achievements during her visit in France, swept away

all barriers, and the Academy did itself the honor to make her a member. She presented to the Academy (as the test painting on which her admission was based) her portrait of the boy-king, Louis XV. He is so handsome in this portrait, with his beautiful eyes, noble brow, and abundant curling hair, that one does not wonder that the title *Bien aimé* was given him, and that all Paris went wild with joy when he recovered from an illness.

"'How sweet it is to be so loved!' he exclaimed when told of the devotion of his subjects. 'What have I done to deserve it?'

"'What had he done, indeed?' ask the historians when the whole record of his life was written. How much better, to our human judging, for him and for France, if he had died in his innocent youth, beloved and regretted!

"Even in Rosalba's portrait, though the face is pure and distinguished, it is cold and selfish. It is not a loving face, not even one that would appreciate and be grateful for the affection lavished upon it. One wonders if the purity and distinction were really there, or whether Rosalba gave the portrait a transforming touch, endow-

ing it with something of her own whiteness of soul, so that the face

> " ' Like the stained web which whitens in the sun,
> Grew pure by being purely shone upon.'

" Rosalba visited France in 1720. It was the period of its greatest corruption, that of the Regency, between the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV., when faith was broken down and morality laughed at, when the whole business of life was to amuse one's self. As the great and noble in life lost its hold upon men's minds, greater weight was given to the externals. Never was more attention given to elegance in dressing, in manners, and in the arts, to accomplishments and graces. There is a certain dangerous and seductive charm in the result when the entire nobility, the flowering of a nation leading the world in its cultivation, ' is solely occupied in pleasing one another.' Such an idle, luxurious life could not last—the rose must fall to pieces from its over-flowering. ' At the death of Louis XV., in 1774, the easy-mannered joyance, the peaceful and brilliant charm of fashionable and philosophical society were reaching their end ; the time of stern realities was approaching with long strides.'

Louis XV.

From a pastel portrait by Rosalba Carriera.

"But fifty years before there was not a cloud in the sky. Louis XIV. had created the most beautiful gardens, the largest, most magnificent suite of apartments for the ceremonies and pleasures of a court that the world had seen. Versailles was a never-ending chain, in which each link was composed of ball-rooms, theatres, *salles des billiards*, galleries of paintings, banquet-rooms, cabinets for gaming and for drinking, long galleries for promenades and state processions, throne-rooms, and chambers where the beds, raised on a balustraded dais and canopied with costly stuffs, were magnificent as thrones. What was the natural result of such environment but to make life as exquisite and as selfish as it in fact became.

"We wonder what impression is made upon the talented Venetian girl, accustomed to the free life of the lagoons, brought up in a healthful, stimulating poverty, in noble artistic surroundings, breathing the fresh salt air of the Adriatic, kneeling with reverence in San Marco, inspired by Titian, by Giorgione and Paul Veronese, but charmed most of all by the wonderful coloring and matchless grace of Correggio, laboring with a tireless industry to re-

alize her ideals, utterly given with a high and pure enthusiasm to her art!

"Her journal during her visit to France exists, but it is a meagre jotting of events. She was too busy to write long descriptions of what she saw and what she thought. One should have seen her, have talked with her. So I thought at Venice, when I tried the effect of the amulet which had such remarkable results in your hands; but it seems that the tear of the aloe is only a balm for *woman's* tears, for it had no effect on my masculine eyes.

"But one day in Paris before leaving you, I came across a lucky find in an old curiosity shop kept by a Hebrew, the most wily and seductive of his race—a place into which I had stumbled, attracted by some finely colored old meerschaums which proved to be too exorbitant in price for my somewhat problematical exchequer. In this old shop, full of all manner of entrancing antiquities, I happened to notice an old japanned tin box. I was in search of something of the kind. I thought then of pursuing a course of study with Pasteur, and I wanted a case in which to carry vials to and from the laboratory. This box had slides for

a strap, and trays with divisions which had once contained tubes of oil paint, but which would serve equally well for my purpose. I bought it for a song, but never used it, for the next day I was summoned to America. I decided that it might be convenient to hold toilet articles during the voyage, and had it sent to my stateroom, where on the first day out I made an important discovery. I had thought that it contained only two trays, but on removing these and piling them one on the other beside the box, I saw that there must be a space below what I had taken for the bottom of the box. A little prying with my pocket-knife and this false bottom was lifted out, and neatly fitting in the space beneath lay this manuscript. It was well for me that the keeper of the antiquity shop had not known the fact, but the box had been the *boîte à couleurs* of the painter Antoine Watteau, and this was his journal during the two years of Rosalba's visit in Paris :

JOURNAL.

"February, 1720.

"The Signorina Rosalba Carriera is coming to Paris ! I have just learned it from Pierre

Crozat. He is her patron, and is to be her host as well as mine. He has offered her rooms in his hotel on the Rue de Richelieu at the Ramparts (now Boulevard des Italiens) for her residence and that of her mother and sisters (for she brings with her her entire family) during her stay in Paris. What a wonderful man he is, this Pierre Crozat! A bachelor, he has made art his wife and the artists his children. His hotel on the Rue Richelieu is a true palace. Palace did I say? It is better, it is a museum, formed of a collection of collections made by connoisseurs and experts. Its long gallery on the garden front is filled with hundreds of paintings, of bronzes, of statues. Its every apartment is crammed with thousands of books and engravings, and the great rotunda on the second floor is lined with precious cabinets filled with intaglios and engraved gems, original drawings of the old masters and other precious objects of art; and with all this wealth he is not selfish. When the world began to flock to my studio after my first success, keeping me from my work by its senseless compliments and chatter, Pierre Crozat came to my rescue. 'Come to my town house,' he said, 'as you

have so often been my guest at my country villa at Montmorency. Then you honored me by painting your *fêtes galantes*, which have made you famous by their laughter and liberty. Now that people embarrass you with their attentions, come to me again, and I will be your Cerberus to keep them from disturbing your hours of inspiration. You shall have a studio, an apartment, quite to yourself; only in the evening, when the labors of the day are ended, will I ask you to join me and a few choice friends at dinner, with music and conversation thereafter.'

"Could any one have been kinder? Among this wealth of the best examples of the painters of Italy I have studied anew and have gained much, and all of these riches he has offered on the same terms to his Venetian *protégée*, this Rosalba Carriera. I shall be jealous of her; not grudging her my friend's patronage, but his affection.

"Among the paintings are some pastels by Rosalba herself, which M. Crozat acquired when in Venice. She paints with a grace, a style unknown to any of our artists of the present day. Her coloring is a trifle chalky, and

this gives her portraits the air of ghosts, beautiful phantoms, too pure and spiritual for our fleshly life. Her paintings are so interesting that one wonders as to her personality. What is she like? She is doubtless very different from her work. We artists put our best selves into our pictures, our ideals of what we would be, but we are so busy realizing these ideals on canvas that we have no time to do so in our lives. To judge from my *fêtes champêtres*, the gay and innocent garden-parties which I am always imagining, one would think me a joyous, light-hearted youth, a *beau galant*, accomplished, self-assured, with no flutter of the heart more serious than that formed by the breath of a lady's fan. No one would recognize the solitary, shy, and melancholy Watteau in his pictures. This Rosalba is doubtless a buxom but elderly matron with wine-washed cheeks, an eater of garlic and strong cheese, vulgar and commonplace.

"April.

"Rosalba has arrived. I saw her last night at a concert which Monsieur Crozat gave in her honor, and to which he invited all the notables, both of the court and of the artistic and the

financial world. I saw Law, the great banker, the eminent critic Mariette, and the Comte de Caylus, several learned and pious abbés in contrast to the Regent, the ladies of the court, and the prima donnas of the opera, and officers of the army almost as out of place as myself. Antoine executed a charming morceau on the flute, Mademoiselle d'Argenon sang, and was applauded to the skies, then Pacini, and after these virtuosi Monsieur Crozat introduced the signorina. It seemed to me a great mistake to submit a mere amateur, to whom music was only a recreation, to comparison with the most able artists of the day. When my friend led her forward, I pitied her from my heart. A woman not in her first youth, but about my own age, not absolutely beautiful, but of distinguished bearing and gentle manners, she stood for a moment and looked about her with an appealing glance, and I saw that she had the most beautiful eyes in the world. Then she lifted her violin to her shoulder, and in a moment she had forgotten us all and we had forgotten her in her wonderful playing. Strong and firm, her touch was at the same time marvellously sympathetic. It was as though we

heard the voice of an angel triumphing and soaring. She captured us all; we were hers at once.

"After the concert was over I pressed near for an introduction, but the Regent must have his turn first. He congratulated her warmly, and invited her to the king's ball, a fête at which the king himself will dance with other noble youths of his own age (ten years) in a ballet composed for the occasion. It is a ball to which all the courtiers and fashionables of Paris are longing to be invited, and I heard the Duc d'Orleans ask the signorina to view it from his own box, in company with his daughter, the Duchesse de Berri. I was vexed that my friend Crozat should have accepted such company for her, and told him so, but he showed me how important it was that the signorina should be seen to be sought after by people of the highest rank, and then the patronage of all others would follow. 'I am determined,' he said, 'to make her famous. This visit to France shall unlock for her not alone every door of opportunity in Paris, but in the world.'

"April.

"I have lunched with Rosalba *en famille*,

have been admitted to her studio, and have watched her at work. My admiration of her skill increases. She has asked me to sit for her, and to give her in return for my portrait one of my paintings, which I am very willing to do.

"I have had my first sitting. Unhappily for me the signorina works with a surprising celerity; there will not be as many of these *tête-à-têtes* as I would like. She gave me a description of the king's ball, which was very brilliant. The children's ballet was composed with a certain ingenuity. The action of the libretto was this: Grief, disguised as Reason, wishes to establish the empire of Care in the palace of the king. Pleasure replies with a madrigal. The true god of Reason appears and approves the counsels of Pleasure. The spectacle of two personages pretending to be Reason and counselling at variance with each other is perplexing, and Minerva is called in to decide between them. She unmasks Grief, who retires defeated with Care, and Pleasure is crowned, and the ball is opened by her triumphal procession, in which she leads the king by the hand. The

parts of the goddesses were acted and sung by the ladies of the opera. Mademoiselle Antier, who represented Minerva, was enthusiastically applauded, and the king gave her a pension of 1200 livres. A very beautiful dance was given by a fine ballet in the suite of the Goddess Pleasure, and by the king costumed as the God of Love, with children of all the greatest families of the French nobility as cupids. Monsieur le Duc de Chartres represented Hymen, and among his followers were the Prince de Turenne, the Duc de Montmorency, and others. There were also quadrilles of Moors, Indians, Chinese, shepherds, shepherdesses, peasants, sailors, then a *grand entrée* of French knights. The symphony was very fine, and a comedy, entitled "Don Japheth of Armenia," written by Scarron, followed, and occasioned much laughter. The king danced twice alone; the first time with little vivacity. He seemed to the signorina very delicate, and had a cold, uninterested air, seemingly regarding the fête as a very wearisome performance. Before his second dance the signorina was much shocked by a very unfortunate accident. The Chevalier de Fénelon, of the Royal Guards, aged twenty-

two, endeavoring to climb into one of the boxes, fell on the points of the sharp railing which pierced a blood-vessel. He was carried from the ball-room, and died almost immediately at the house of the surgeon. The signorina rose to retire, for she supposed that this terrible event would put an end to the festivities. But the Duc d'Orleans decided that it would be giving a poor application of the principles of Pleasure just announced by the ballet as those which were to govern the reign of the king; and accordingly the king, who had witnessed the accident and was somewhat affected by it, if one might judge from his pallor, was led out for his second dance, and the whirl of gayety continued as though nothing had happened. 'Surely,' said Rosalba, 'this is a lesson in inhumanity and selfishness which one might regret giving to so tender a child.'

"May.

"Rosalba, who has been honored by the patronage of many of our noblest families, has today received an order to go to Versailles to paint the portrait of the king. This will postpone my sittings, but I am glad of it, for it will lengthen out our interviews. While she is at

Versailles I will busy myself in painting something for her. Monsieur Crozat said to her to-day, 'You must feel that you have received the highest honor in the gift of France, since you are to paint the portrait of the king.'

"'Not so,' she replied, 'there is another honor which I would prize far more, and that is to be created a member of the French Academy.'

"'Ah!' exclaimed Monsieur Crozat, 'do not desire the impossible.'

"'How the impossible? I am already a member of the academies of several Venetian cities.'

"'And deservedly, but our French Academy has enacted a law that no woman shall ever be elected to its membership. Unfortunately I am powerless to help you.'

"May.

"I have to-day received a summons from the Academy to send in a painting from which they may judge of my eligibility to membership. I have time to paint a masterpiece if the inspiration will but come. It is an honor which will make my fortune. I would have set about it this morning, but Monsieur Crozat came to me

asking me to sit again for Rosalba, who has returned from Versailles. I did not tell her this news, for I know how ardently she has desired this honor for herself. Would that it were in my power to procure it for her. I asked her how she enjoyed her stay at Versailles, and she had much of interest to relate. She did not weary the king by making him pose continually, but watched him at his play and made rapid sketches. With some of his young companions he was playing at blindman's buff in the great *galerie des glaces*, when, not wishing to be detected by the boy who was blinded, he took off his cross and cordon of the St. Esprit, and threw the ribbon over the head of a boy of about his own size. The Duc d'Orleans told the signorina that in so doing he really conferred the order of knighthood on his companion, who might in future claim of the king that he had made him a member of the order of the St. Esprit ;* so that this bit of childish pleasantry may have serious consequences.

" The incidents of the next visit were not so pleasant. The king was in ill-humor, because,

* A claim which was actually preferred and granted.

though the Prince de Bourbon had given him a fine gun, the Duc d'Orleans would not permit him to go hunting with him. 'I will have good sport all the same,' he muttered, 'and will kill my own game, which is more than the Regent can do.'

"So that afternoon, with only his body-servant, he went into one of the *bosquets* near the palace, and caused his valet to lead his little pet spaniel a short distance away for him to fire at. Having wounded the little animal, it crawled to his feet and licked his hands; but this did not touch his heart, and he caused the valet to drag him away again, and continued shooting until he had killed the forgiving little creature.

"Rosalba said that when this was related of him she could no longer abide to look at him, and caused the portrait to be brought back with her to finish from memory, or rather from imagination of what a boy-king so beloved by his subjects should be.

"July.

"Monsieur Crozat has taken us to his château at Montmorency. The weather at Paris was warm, and I am glad of the change, for I love to

paint in the park. The gardens around the Hôtel Crozat at Paris are fine, and descend by a beautiful terrace at the rear, while a subterranean way, arranged as a grotto, pierces the ramparts and leads to his beautiful gardens outside the city. But at Montmorency one enjoys the real country, if one will, for there is always company at the château, a princely house which Monsieur Crozat has built, decorated with the paintings of Lebrun and La Fosse. The grand salon, with a cupola ornamented with frescoes, is a stately apartment, and the sculptures in the family chapel are very fine. But to me the formal garden, laid out by Le Notre in his best style, and the park with its vistas through the magnificent trees, are a delight and an inspiration. I have painted my best pictures here, and have made many sketches and studies.*

* Jean Jacques Rousseau afterward lived in a hermitage in this park, and wrote of it as follows : "It is in this profound and delicious solitude, in the midst of woods and of waters, charmed by the concerts of birds, and by the perfume of orange blossoms, that I composed, in a continual ecstasy, the fifth volume of 'Emile.'" De Goncourt writes of Watteau's pictures painted here : "With their foliage trickling and cascading to the ground, and *bosquets* of witch-elm spreading a fan-like screen behind the siesta of lovers, and arches of ver-

"It was a great pleasure to me to show my favorite points of view to the Signorina Rosalba, and I asked her to choose a background for my new picture. We have had much delightful converse on art matters, for she cares not for the society at the château, and comes often to see me paint. These fashionable people care nothing for nature. They have spent a week here, and have not set foot in the park. Their mornings are occupied with cards, their evenings with music and dancing. A party went away this morning who had been here ten days and had not seen the gardens. This was mentioned last night, and to please their host they made the tour of the gardens lighted by flambeaux.

"Rosalba admires my work. This is a great pleasure to me. She appreciates my management of light which I learned in Holland; she

dure opening like the side scenes of a theatre, and pathways thronged with a 'minuet in a sunbeam,' and great forests rolling up their shade over groups of bathing girls, and all that evanescent foliage touched with his fluid color, and decorated with balustrades, terms, statues, women of marble and children of stone, and fountains enveloped in rain, of which Watteau has created a nature '*plus belle que la nature.*'"

has praised the grouping of my figures that I studied as a young man at the theatre, where I painted scenery and picked up for myself certain tricks of composition. Nothing escapes her intelligent observation. She is a wonderful woman. Our host admires her as much as I do. He also leaves his guests and sits beside us in the park. 'Ah, Watteau, my good friend,' he said to me the other day, 'how much I am indebted to you for making the stay of the signorina in my house an agreeable one!'

"August.

"We have returned to the city. Rosalba could not remain long at Montmorency. She was recalled to paint a miniature of the king, and in spite of her dislike for him, has gone again to Versailles. She has painted the Regent, the Prince de Conti, and nearly every noble of the highest rank. She is turning away orders, for if she had an hundred eyes and a hundred hands she could not fulfil all the commands which she receives. Monsieur Crozat urges engagements upon her. It is because he wishes her to remain long in France. I miss the country, and stifle here in town, but I could

not stay after she went away. The park was tedious, I could get no inspiration, I could not paint. The signorina, I think, must miss the country also. I place flowers at her plate every morning. She loves best white flowers, as she does all white objects. It is but natural. As the animals that inhabit the great sunny wastes, from the little ermine to the great polar bear, take on the same whiteness of their surroundings, so Rosalba, whose soul is all white, loves to environ herself with purity. In painting the portraits of the ladies of the court she uses, where she can, white accessories—lace, gauze, plumes, ermine, and always white flowers. Of gems she will have none, but only pearls, and these she paints of a surprising beauty and lustre, from her imagination alone, thus endowing many a beauty of scant fortune with a *parure* such as a queen might envy. Her name, which signifies white rose, was a prophecy of her tastes. When first I presented her white lilacs the company protested, for here, in France, it is *en règle* to give white flowers only on four occasions—at christenings, at weddings, at first communion, and at death; and one repeated in support of this custom:

" ' White flowers, white flowers, all flowers among,
Camellias, jasmine, roses ;
'Tis for the pure, the loved, the young,
Each sweet bud opes and closes.'

" ' Then,' said our host, ' they belong to our guest by right of pre-eminence ; for though we do not celebrate now either her first communion or her removal to Paradise, no saint could be purer, and love will not cease to be offered to the signorina, though she will not deign to accept it.' It was a long speech for Monsieur Crozat, and a gallant one.

" September.

" Rosalba and her sister have gone to visit at the house of Monsieur Crozat's brother, the great financier, who has purchased Louisiana ; she is to paint his beautiful daughters, of whom the Duchesse de Choiseul is the most charming. We are all distracted by her absence. The good Crozat wanders into my rooms and maunders of Rosalba. This exasperates me, but when he goes I lay down my brushes and rush into his study to talk of her. I found her violin in the music-room last night, and laid it against my cheek, as I have seen her caress it ; but Monsieur Crozat, coming quickly in, took it

away from me. 'Nay, Watteau,' he said, 'you are free to use anything of mine, but no one must touch an article that she has made sacred.' He spends his time in planning surprises for her return. I lay my little offering of jasmine and roses on her plate every morning, though she is not here.

"September.

"Something has happened. At last I deserve well of the signorina. Monsieur Crozat has used his influence in vain to have her admitted to the Academy. Yesterday the messenger came for my picture, on which my election depends. It was finished. It is one of my best, for it was painted at Montmorency under her eyes, but I did not send it, for suddenly I had a lucky inspiration. Rosalba's portrait of the king was in her studio, but turned with its face to the wall, for she does not care for it, though it is a beautiful work of art. It occurred to me that she would never miss it if I sent it to the Academy. The judges will see it in spite of themselves, and they cannot fail to be won over. Before sending it I sought Monsieur Crozat and asked his advice. He trembled with joy. 'Ah, dear friend, how can I ever thank you?'

he said. 'It is the desire of her heart.' And so, as I had the right, I sent a picture to the Academy, but not *my* picture.

"Monsieur Crozat and I count the hours and tremble for the result.

"October.

"The letter has come from the Academy: Rosalba was unanimously received. Good Monsieur Crozat is wild with joy; he embraced me with tears. 'My friend,' he said, 'she owes it all to you, but I have a favor to ask of you. You have often acknowledged that you owe something to me. Will you grant it?' 'Whatever you ask,' I replied, my heart swelling with joy and gratitude. 'Then do not tell her,' he besought, 'the part you have played in this matter. She knows that I have labored for this thing; let her think that she owes it to me. See, my friend, I have bought these pearls to give her at the same time, that she may always have them to paint from when she wishes to have them in her portraits; but she would think nothing of the gift in comparison with this honor. I would not ask you to let that be my gift were it not that I love her. Yes, Antoine, old as I am, I love her, and I can do

much for her; all that wealth can do to bring leisure, opportunity, luxury shall be hers. She shall paint only for fame, never again for money; she shall travel; she shall meet the most cultivated and distinguished people. Is it too much to ask, Antoine, that she should be my wife?'

"'Not if she loves you,' I replied, 'and I see not how she can help it, for you are goodness and kindness personified.' But the words choked me, for Monsieur Crozat's confidence had awakened me to a knowledge of my own affection, and I knew suddenly that I too loved Rosalba. But what could I do as a man of honor?

"It was much to ask, this relinquishment of all claim on her gratitude. Before I realized that I loved her I had looked forward to the sweet reward of her thanks in return for the sacrifice. To have had her look at me with that great delight in her eyes, and say, 'Antoine, my friend, but for you I should not have heard this.' I had gloated over it in anticipation, and now I thought of what I might dare to say in reply. But Monsieur Crozat was my friend, my benefactor; I owed everything to him, even

this precious acquaintance with Rosalba, and I could not hesitate. But I would not see her joy, I could not see her express her gratitude to him, and I let him carry her the news alone.

"I placed my jasmine at her plate at dinner, but I would not dine with them, for Monsieur Crozat had invited in a goodly company to celebrate her victory. I wandered in the garden, but I could not go far. I strolled along the terrace and looked in at the windows. The salons were brilliantly lighted, the guests would not notice me in the shadow of the garden. Rosalba and Monsieur Crozat were not in the great gallery. I saw them at last in the *cabinet* of precious stones. He had opened a little drawer, and was holding the pearls in his hand, with such an eager, hopeful look in his honest face. I could not bear to look at hers, and I turned away and paced the garden walks, a soul possessed by demons. I grew calmer after a time and entered the house. Monsieur Crozat was bidding farewell to the last guests at the door, and Rosalba stood alone by the fireplace —that pretty fireplace with sculptured loves above the pier-glass, and loves wrought in metal on the andirons, warming their baby hands at

the light blaze, as I had warmed my heart in her presence. She held out her hand to me and thanked me for the jasmine I had placed at her plate. 'Did you write the verses, too?' she asked.

"'What verses?' I replied.

"'These,' she answered; 'they are a continuation of our discussion about white flowers, and a graceful defence of your gift. If you did not write them, who did?'

"I took the paper she handed me and read:

"'White flowers, white flowers, all flowers among
Camellias, jasmine, roses;
'Tis love, 'tis love, shy, pure, and young,
The orange-bloom discloses.
But secrets told by orange flowers
Are safely kept in jasmine bowers.'

"'It was doubtless Monsieur Crozat who placed this poem with the flowers,' I replied. 'It can be no longer any secret to you that he loves you. He will make you happy, and your friends should all rejoice in your happiness.'

"Rosalba trembled; she was much moved. 'And you counsel me to this marriage, my friend?' she asked.

"'I do,' I replied. The words cost me a

great effort, but I am thankful that I was strong enough to bear her questioning gaze unflinchingly. 'He is a noble man. I can ask no greater joy for you than the possession of such a heart.' I kissed her hand, but she made no reply. I found Monsieur Crozat in the hall, and bade him farewell, telling him that I was called to England. I could stay no longer in that house. He tried to make me change my decision. He said that he was going on the morrow to Montmorency, and wished me to remain to be the guardian, the friend of Rosalba; but I could not tell him why I could not accept this post. I shall never see him again or her, but my prayers shall be always for their happiness.

"So ends the journal. Poor Watteau, did he sacrifice himself in vain? For Rosalba did not marry Crozat. We judge from her journal that he offered himself and was refused, for he gave up his house to her, going away and secluding himself at his château at Montmorency, while she made all speed to finish the orders which she had accepted, refusing all new commands and hurrying home to Venice. A letter

from Monsieur Crozat shortly after her return to Venice, and which we find in her printed correspondence, announces the death of Watteau a few months after the last date in his journal. There is another letter of Crozat's in the same collection begging Rosalba to return to Paris. 'The house,' he writes, 'which you honored with your presence still stands ready to receive you; the little loves in front of the fireplace stretch out their hands, longing for the flame which will not be lighted till you return again. The other cupid in the carved work above, and to the right of the mantel, guards the gift which you would not accept at my hands. You have but to touch the heart which he holds, and it is yours. Should you delay your coming until after my death, you will still find it, for I arranged the hiding-place myself, and no one but you knows the secret.'

"The resemblance of the decoration described by both Watteau and Crozat to that in your own little salon has made me wonder if it might not be possible that when Crozat's house was pulled down, the interior woodwork was removed and used in the construction of other houses. It would be strange, indeed, if

you should find that you have it in your little parlor at Versailles. Pray, touch the heart held by the carved cupid, and tell me what you find.

"Always devotedly,

"VAN."

"Well, of all absurd stories!" Winnie exclaimed, as she laid down the manuscript.

"How absurd?" asked Tib. "Watteau and Crozat may have loved Rosalba, who knows? The French artist La Tour wanted to marry her. Why not Watteau, who knew her so much better?"

"That might have been, but he did not and could not relinquish his election at the Academy in her favor. He was a member before her arrival in France."

"He may have assisted in her election, all the same. I think the story is every bit as good as any of ours."

"What I see no probability and no reason in," said Adelaide, "is his bringing in our own fireplace. That quite violates my sense of the dramatic unities."

"I don't know," said Winnie; "Van never

does anything without some sort of a reason. He liked this little fireplace of ours, and one day when he called here I happened to be out sketching, and when I returned I found him up in a chair examining that little cupid."

"Do you mean the one on the right of the mantel? It seems to me it does hold a heart, as Crozat's letter states."

Winnie sprang upon a chair and gave the object in the hand of the cupid a vigorous little punch. Instantly a tiny door flew open, revealing a small closet, and in the closet a box. Winnie descended and the girls crowded around her.

"There is something written on the lid in old French," said Adelaide; "can you translate it?"

"Why, yes; it's easy enough. 'To my white rose, my pearl of pearls.'" Winnie opened the box and lifted a strand of pearls.

"Then these are really the pearls that Monsieur Crozat offered to Rosalba?" Adelaide asked. "How very remarkable!"

"How very remarkably like Van!" Winnie replied.

"Van! What did he have to do with it?"

"It's perfectly plain," Winnie laughed. "I pressed the button, but Van did the rest. He must have discovered this secret closet when he was here, and instead of telling us about it have concealed the pearls there for me to find. Not a bad scheme, but a little too labored in its ingenuity—just like Van."

CHAPTER VII.

ROSE POMPADOUR.

"One dame was dressed in rose-red silk,
And one in velvet green,
And one in satin as white as milk,
Would their souls as pure had been."

OF all china maniacs Mrs. Van Silver was one of the most incurable. She haunted the museum of Sèvres, gloating over the beautiful masterpieces preserved there, and could talk very learnedly of all the periods and the marks which distinguished a factory or an artist. She was a collector as well, and her pretty cabinets with glass doors were filled with Venice glass, bits of Oriental porcelain, Italian majolica, and

Madame Récamier.

Dresden china. She cared more for historic or antique specimens than for the most exquisite examples of modern art, and never minded how often a punch-bowl had been riveted, or whether a piece of genuine old Henri II. was so seamed with diamond cement that it resembled a piece of Japanese crackle. She had learned to mend china very cleverly herself. "We are all of us, as we grow older, a little the worse for wear, my dear," she would say; "but think of the souvenirs, the associations held together in that cracked blue glass salt-cellar. The setting is silver, style de l'Empire, you recognize. Yes, it belonged to Madame Récamier. I have its pedigree. There is a *huilier* of the time of Louis XIV.," she said, pointing to two graceful little porcelain pitchers for oil and vinegar enclosed in a porcelain castor. "I've no doubt it was a part of the furnishings of Clagny, Madame de Montespan's *maison de plaisance.* I bought it at the curiosity shop here in Versailles. They could only say that it was found in a cupboard of an old house on the Rue des Reservoirs; but that is just where Clagny was situated, and it is quite of the period. I have hoped to find some Sèvres porcelain here

of the time of Madame Pompadour. There is plenty of it in the museum, and one sees exactly what it was like, and how the Sèvres of that period surpassed ours; but although the sellers of antiques have been on the lookout for me all summer, they have been unable to find anything which had the stamp of being genuine. Should you come across any pieces while you are in Versailles, secure them for me no matter at what cost."

"How shall I know them when I see them?" Winnie asked, and Mrs. Van Silver took great pains to instruct her. They visited the museum at Sèvres together, and Winnie learned to know the exquisite flower paintings of Bachelier as well as the colors invented by the chemist Macquer; but though she also haunted the curiosity shops she could find nothing in them that remotely resembled the period of Sèvres' greatest glory.

When Mrs. Van Silver left Versailles she gave Winnie a bank-note for five hundred francs. "It is just as well that you should have it," she said. "One often loses an opportunity by not snatching it up the instant it is offered. You know enough now to buy with

no risk of being deceived. I will give a hundred francs for a tea-cup, in fragments even, and in like proportion for anything you can find."

After this anything remotely connected with porcelain interested Winnie. She stopped one afternoon to watch Boulette playing with some broken pieces of china in the garden. Boulette was the child of the *concierge*, who was also their landlady. He was a fat, flaxen-haired little fellow, as round as a dumpling and as bright as a sunbeam, who played about all day among the flowers. He had made himself a little table of a flat tile, and was laying it with bits of broken china, with a tiny bit of a flower on each by way of the repast.

> "Je suis un enfant gaté
> J'aime les gateaux et les patées
> Et les confitures,"

sang Boulette as Winnie approached.

"May I have some too?" Winnie asked, and Boulette nodded gravely. "*C'est le fête de Noël*" (Christmas dinner), he said; "one always has good things to eat at Noël. Do you know the verses? I learned them last Noël.

Shall I say them for you?" and Boulette recited :

LA NOËL DES BÉBÉS.

La neige tombe, c'est Noël !
Les cloches sonnent dans l'espace,
On entend un cri dans le ciel,
C'est le Petit Jésus qui passe !

Il vi'ent voir les petits enfants,
Car c'est le jour des gourmandises
Et sils n'ont pas été méchants
Il leur porte des friandises.

Pour pénétrer dans la maison,
Il entre par la cheminée
Que, vu la mauvaise saison,
On a de nouveau ramonée.

Il met, dans les petits souliers,
De beaux jouets et des images,
Il écrit, sur des fins papiers ;
Des sonhaits pour les enfants sages.

Pour les méchants, car il en est,
Le Petit Jésus leur inflige
Des petits boutons sur le nez
Ne faut, il pas qu'on les corrige ?

Et, pour sortir de la maison,
Il s'en va par la cheminée,
Que, vu la mauvaise saison
L'on a de nouveau ramonée.

La neige tombe, c'est Noël !
Les cloches sonnent dans l'espace,
On entend un cri dans le ciel,
C'est le Petit Jésus qui passe !

"That is charming, little Boulette," said Winnie.

"*Nest ce pas, mademoiselle?*" said Boulette's mother, who had come toward them from the porter's lodge, and now regarded her progeny with pride. "That child can recite poetry with no more effort than a parrot; it is a true angel of the good God. It is fortunate, mademoiselle, that poetry is cheap, for my children can have nothing of any value."

"The best things have no money value," Winnie replied cheerfully—"sunshine, and pure air, and poetry, and love—"

"Love? *Ah! voilà*, that is the most expensive luxury of all. It costs nothing, think you, to marry and *monter un ménage?* Many a pretty girl would have lovers in plenty if she only had a reasonable *dot*. That is the matter with my Rose. She has a lover, Gaston; but can they marry on love? Not at all. Gaston has a good position as salesman in a perfumer's shop in Paris. He is a clever salesman, and the busi-

ness is a good one. His employer is old, and he would take him into partnership for a thousand francs, and Gaston's father has said that he will consent to his marriage with our Rose if we will give her the thousand francs. It is for that we have rented the villa to *ces dames* and have incommoded ourselves in the lodge for the summer; but *ces dames'* five hundred francs of rental is only half, and *nous voilà* as far off as ever."

"But with another season you will have enough."

"Ah! mademoiselle, there is the trouble. Gaston's employer wants his thousand francs at once; and there is another young man ready to give fifteen hundred for the place, though Gaston has the first chance, for his employer likes him; but love, as mademoiselle sees, is not money."

"Cheer up," said Winnie; "perhaps the money will come in some unexpected way," and for the first time the generous girl regretted that she was not rich.

Boulette looked up from his Barmecide feast. "*Le petit Jésus* will give Rose her dowry at Noël," he said. "Come, mademoiselle, this is

your place ; eat some of my *confiture*," and he handed Winnie a scrap of broken china on which he had placed a rose-leaf.

"If this is Noël," said Winnie, "where are the snowflakes? Your poem said :

"'La neige tombe, c'est Noël.'"

"*La voilà! Voilà la neige!*" exclaimed Boulette, shaking the great syringa-bush under which Winnie was sitting, until she was covered with the flying white petals ; "and if mademoiselle will come around to the other side of the house and sit under the great rose-bush, I will make it snow pink snowflakes."

Winnie allowed the child to lead her, and the mother followed.

"I remember when my father planted that rose-bush," Boulette's mother said. "It was just before the Prussians came to Versailles. It was a droll time to be busying one's self in one's garden. Our neighbors were fleeing on every side. I remember I ran to my father to tell him that Pierre le Grand had seen the advance-guard of the Prussians ten miles from Versailles, and that my mother said she was going to Paris, and that he must be quick ; but he patted

down the earth around the rose-bush as carefully as though there were no reason for haste, and sang, as he did so, that song of Béranger's. Mademoiselle knows it doubtless :

" ' Quoi ! ces monuments cheris,
Histoire
De notre gloire,
Sécrouleraient en débris ?
Quoi les Prussians à Paris !
Gai ! gai ! serons nos rangs ;
Esperance
De la France ! '

" ' You will thank me some day for this,' he said, as he finally put away his spade. ' You will want blossoms from this bush for your wedding bouquet, and this rose-tree may give you the only dowry you will have. Remember that, little girl.' And his saying came true, for I carried them to the church, though they were pink and not white, for I remembered what my father had said ; and he was dead then—killed in the last sortie. I was married without any dowry other than this place, and it was half destroyed, for the Prussians occupied it while they were in Versailles. They wantonly destroyed everything they could not carry away. They broke the mirrors with pis-

tol practice, and slashed the best upholstery with their swords, and built fires on the hardwood floors, though they did not burn the house entirely to the ground; for that I thank them. But the meanest thing which they did was to carry away my father's collection of porcelain. Ah! mademoiselle should have seen it—a whole tea service of Sèvres, the rare old Sèvres that the connoisseurs prize so much."

"And you say your father possessed an entire service of that porcelain?" Winnie gasped.

"Yes, mademoiselle; all in delicate rose pink powdered with little forget-me-nots as blue as Boulette's eyes. There was a tea-pot, and a tiny cream-pitcher, and a *sucrier*, and four cups and saucers, and four plates. I have heard my mother tell of it often, and I remember it myself, and how I used to beg my father to let me eat from the plates, but he would never allow it."

"And haven't you a single cup or saucer?"

"Not one, mademoiselle. The Prussians carried them all to Germany. The *placard* (wall cupboard) where my father kept them had been pried open with bayonets, and was empty."

"What a pity," Winnie thought, "for Mrs.

Van Silver and for poor little Rose, for whom this tea service might have furnished a dowry!" She strolled away, too preoccupied to notice that she was carrying in her hand Boulette's plate of imaginary *confitures*, and she slipped it into her pocket, where it clinked beside the *bonbonnière* that held the tear of the magic aloe. She walked through the park toward the Trianon. The Queen of the Frogs was withholding the water from the thirsty stone turtles, for it was not a day *des grands eaux*, and the mischievous little cupids who, when the fountains were in action, blew water at one another through carved bellows, looked hot and dusty. Even the statues of the horses in the Rocher of Apollo, who seemed to have been brought to the pools to drink, appeared to be fractious and impatient because the waters were not leaping and splashing about them.

Winnie was out of sorts with herself, disappointed and weary, and the park, with all its magnificence, tired her still more; the distance to Trianon seemed interminable. Just now a gay, careless life seemed really preferable to the wearisome ceremoniousness and punctilio of Louis XIV., as a vision floated through her

mind of the court of the Marchioness of Pompadour; for the court of the time of the fifteenth Louis was more truly formed and ruled by that clever, though unscrupulous woman than by the puppet who disgraced her, himself, the throne, and France.

Louis XIV. had built up Versailles, and had imposed on the nobility of France a wearisome court etiquette. He was the Grand Monarque to the last; not a great man, but a great king, as scrupulous himself in observance of courtly dignity as in the observance he demanded from his courtiers. He kept his word, and his old age, under the guidance of his legal, though uncrowned wife, Madame de Maintenon, was decent and respectable; but the pomp and ostentation on which he insisted were tiresome beyond endurance. It was not strange that the pendulum in the succeeding reign should have swung toward *sans gêne* and unconventionality. Trianon, the direct contrast to Versailles, was the natural outgrowth of a revolt against formality.

Winnie was in perfect sympathy with the graceful French author who wrote: "Trianon, how I love thy great trees, thy lawns, thy fields

of roses! In spring mornings, when the sun still filters through the sparse foliage, and lies in disks of gold upon the velvet lawn, in the sultry afternoons of summer, when the dense shade preserves the freshness of the grass, how many enchanting tales are read, how many tender, golden dreams float like a distant mirage over thy rustic benches and through thy deserted *allées!* Shall I ever see again the little château with its marble steps, the Temple of Love surrounded by its elegant and frail colonnade, the forgotten path, the little river with the white and black swans, the mysterious grotto, the chalets, the village with the house of the grand seigneur, the priest's house, the burgomaster's, the dairy, the tiny huts tapestried with ivy and roofs overgrown with moss? In the beautiful sunsets of autumn I shall always see Louis XV. in brocade and lace, and his rouged and powdered marquise flitting in and out of the shadows."

Winnie ensconced herself in a summer-house, back of the little theatre of the Trianon, and opened the book which she had brought with her; but the air was warm and drowsy, and she could not fix her attention. She took the

balsamic tear from its little casket and played with it idly. She thought of Rose, the portionless girl, whose dream of love might never be realized, though the lost tea service of the marquise would have secured it without question. "If Pompadour were only here," she thought, "or if Rose lived in the time of Pompadour, the course of true love might have run more smoothly." She touched her eyelids gently with the bit of aromatic gum, and suddenly, instead of being only half awake and half asleep, she was either wholly asleep, and enjoying a very vivid dream, or, as she preferred to believe, she was very wide awake in the time of the beautiful marquise. She realized this perfectly, for there was Pompadour, as she had so often seen her in Latour's marvellous portrait—one of the masterpieces of the Louvre, and the finest pastel in all the world—Pompadour in her flowered silk gown, with the rich lace at sleeves and knots of delicate rose-colored ribbon contrasting with the whiteness of her bosom, a beautiful woman from the light blond curls to the high-heeled slippers and the tips of her exquisitely modelled fingers. She was turning over the music of an opera by

Lully, in which she was to take part that evening in the *Théâtre des Petits Cabinets*, and at the same time she was sitting for her portrait to Latour, an eccentric man though a great artist. He had hung his coat on the back of his chair and his wig on a sconce, in order to work with more freedom, and had stipulated that he should not be annoyed by visitors during the sittings. There were plenty of courtiers waiting for admittance in the ante-room. Voltaire had sent in the first volumes of the encyclopædia which lay on the table awaiting the attention of the marchioness. A portfolio of the marchioness's own engravings leaned against the foot of the table, for she was talented as an artist, and practised as well as encouraged the arts.

Among those seeking her favor who were waiting in the ante-room were generals and politicians, for Pompadour elevated men to office or degraded them at her own pleasure. The king had an indolent aversion to business, and referred all matters to her, signing such papers as she recommended without even glancing at them.

Winnie wondered how she herself had gained

admission to the presence of the marchioness, until she glanced at her reflection in a pier-glass, and saw that she was dressed as a servant; then her position suddenly became natural to her, and when Pompadour gave her orders she executed them with a dexterity which showed that she was quite accustomed to her position. She brought her mistress a Venetian hand-mirror, and at her command added a touch of rouge to her cheeks and of powder to her hair.

As she waited upon the marchioness she listened with interest to the conversation of the artist, who was speaking of another sitter of his, Maurice de Saxe, a soldier whom he wished to recommend to the king.

"He is a German and a Protestant," replied the marchioness, "and those considerations are both against him."

"He is your devoted servitor, madame," replied Latour, "an avowed worshipper of beauty, and he will be France's servitor, too, if the king will accept his allegiance. It is not worth while to let such a military genius fall into the hands of Frederick of Prussia."

At the mention of Frederick the Great, Pompadour's brow clouded. "That German boor

has written certain things of me that I can never forgive," she said angrily. "Voltaire has told me. There is nothing that I would not do to have my revenge upon him. He despises women and mocks at them, but there are three women in Europe now who, if they put their heads together, will humble him. One has written me calling me *chère cousine*, the other shall be gained." Winnie knew that the marchioness spoke of herself, of Maria Theresa, of Austria (who had made overtures for an alliance against Germany), and of Catherine of Russia—three clever women, but not to be matched against Frederick the Great, as the Seven Years' War afterward proved.

"This Maurice de Saxe," said Latour, bringing the conversation back to the man for whom he wished patronage, "is a great genius. He studied military engineering and tactics here in France, and the Chevalier Folard tells me that he has originated a novel system of manœuvres which is going to revolutionize modern warfare. If Frederick should obtain that system, you three women will hardly humble him as soon as you hope."

"The king shall give this man a commission

in our army!" Pompadour exclaimed impulsively, and Latour smiled, for he knew that his cause was won. He was a man of scant courtesy, however, and when the marchioness said playfully, "You must make me a beautiful portrait in return for this favor," he said shortly:

"*Faites vous belle, et je vous ferai un beau portrait*" ("Make yourself beautiful, and I will make you a beautiful portrait").

Later, when the hangings of the room were pushed aside and the king entered unannounced, Latour rose angrily, donned his coat and wig, closed his box of colors, and remonstrating with his Majesty for having interrupted him, departed in high dudgeon for Paris.

The marchioness laughed merrily. "We must propitiate and recall him," she explained, "for no one paints as he does."*

* More than a passing allusion is due to this prince of the beautiful art of pastel, of whom Hamerton writes:

"In Latour you have the master of the pastel craft, and a wonderful craft it was in his hands, admirably adapted to his subjects, to whom it lent a lightness and elegance which were the idealization of their own. The courtly graces of the eighteenth century, so remote from us now that they seem thirty generations back instead of three, the splendors of an aris-

The marchioness ordered luncheon, and began over it to discuss with the king the weighty matters suggested in the State correspondence of the morning. It needed the utmost tact of the favorite to induce the king to give the slightest attention to the question whether France should enter into an alliance with the other powers against Germany.

"The whole matter bores me inexpressibly," he said. "Why should I give it any attention?"

"Because war with one or more nations depends on your decision, sire," Pompadour replied.

"The Germans are our natural allies, are they not?" Louis asked. "They are nearer to us geographically, and we have been at peace with them a long time. If by preserving this peace we must fight Austria and Russia, the fighting will be done on German ground before they can reach France. Their cities will be the

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tocracy nearly at the end of its power, but still retaining a style quite pure from democratic manners, found in this art of Latour a record of itself so delicate, that it seems as if the very air of the court were preserved in the tinted dust of his pastels."

MADAME DE POMPADOUR.

From a portrait by Latous.

ones that will have the pleasure of being burned, their fields devastated, and their soldiers killed."

Pompadour pouted and tapped her foot. "Will you make a friendship with the man who has insulted me?" she asked.

"Not I," replied Louis; "I do not care if we do make Germany our foe for coming generations, as the cardinal says we will do if we do not preserve this alliance. If we can only contrive to keep the Germans away from Versailles during my life and yours, *ma belle*, it is all I ask."

"Good," said the marchioness gayly; "then it is all settled. You will sign this treaty, which will go to Vienna this afternoon, and you will make a general of the Count Maurice de Saxe."

The king was not altogether pleased with this plan, and it was not till the battle of Fontenoy, which Saxe won when too ill to sit upon his horse, that he entirely gave the general his confidence. The Seven Years' War, which Pompadour had brought about on account of a matter of pique, proved disastrous in the end to France, and thoroughly estranged German

sentiment, bearing fruit in the invasion of France in our own day, when the invading King William was crowned Emperor of victorious and united Germany in the great hall of Versailles.

Neither Louis nor the marquise would have cared greatly could they have foreseen this. They were thoroughly selfish, embodying, as a French author has said, all the vices except that of avarice.

And yet though the marchioness had realized her ambition, she not only was not happy, but her life could not be called one of pleasure. No one toiled more laboriously than she to entertain the king. His mind was so utterly *blasé* and world-weary, that it had lost the power of finding amusement in anything.

The marchioness had been praised for her fine acting and singing, and she labored for the king's admiration as industriously as a prima donna for fame. She never relinquished her post as virtual prime minister. She fought the influence of every courtier, every woman. As she herself said, her life was a continual combat, without reward and without glory, and yet she had certain estimable qualities, as well

as remarkable gifts. She loved to confer patronage on men of letters and artists, perhaps from the ambition of posing as a benefactress.

Winnie, who had absorbed some faint recollection of Rose's little romance into her dream-life, fancied that Rose was the daughter of the chief chemist of Vincennes, and that she was beloved by a painter of flowers.

Her father had said to her, "I have invented some marvellous colors for china—a rose color which is simply enchanting, a turquoise blue, a jonquille yellow, pure as a flame, and a sumptuous violet, only matched by the petals of pansies—and Bachelier paints so exquisitely, so daintily, that if the king would only advance the money to establish a manufactory of porcelain, we could excel that of the Prussian king at Meissen."

"I will try to obtain this from the king," Winnie had said to Rose, and Bachelier had decorated a cup and saucer for her to show as a sample of what could be done. It had been fired in a little kiln at the private laboratory of the chemist, and Winnie had carried the precious bit of china with her to Trianon and waited her opportunity. It seemed to her that

it had come when the marchioness, happy at having secured the alliance with Austria against Prussia, lunched merrily with the king. At the close of the repast she served the marchioness her coffee in the precious cup. The lady drank it without at first noticing the lovely bit of porcelain. Finally, as she toyed with the cup with her spoon, her attention was caught by the delicate wreath of flowers about the rim. She examined it closely, and then threw it from her in anger, shivering the delicate porcelain upon the marble pavement.

"Why have you dared to serve my coffee in a cup of this new Dresden ware?" she asked of Winnie. "You thought I would not recognize it because I have never seen a piece of it. I have been told, however, of the German triumphs, and I know well that we have no artist in France who can decorate like that, no manufactory which can make such fine porcelain or such a superb tint."

Winnie threw herself upon her knees. "Pardon, madame, it is all French. The color is named for you, Rose Pompadour; the painting is by a Frenchman, who burns to devote his life to the execution of your orders; the paste is the

invention of a French scientist from French earth. He asks your favor to establish a manufactory, which shall eclipse that of Dresden, and carry your fame throughout the world and the centuries."

The marchioness extended her hand silently, and Winnie picked up the broken pieces of china and handed them to her. She looked at them long and earnestly. "These are exquisite little figures of Loves entwined among the flowers," she said musingly.

"It is because madame has made a captive of Love himself," said Winnie mendaciously; for the artist had told her that he had introduced these figures because Love had been the inspirer of his work.

The marchioness looked at her coldly. "You have learned the flattery of the court. Tell me the truth, child, what interest have you in the founding of a national porcelain manufactory in France?"

Then Winnie confessed her interest in Rose, and how the girl's future depended upon the bounty of the marchioness. Pompadour heard her through, and then said gently:

"These roses are so natural, that should you

plant the bits of china, I would not be astonished if real rose-trees sprang up. Tell the chemist to come to me, and I will listen to his project. This clever artist shall make me a table service. It shall be the first work of the new manufactory."

"Ah, madame! madame!" Winnie exclaimed, while tears of happiness came to her eyes.

"Tush, child, it is all selfishness. One would like to be remembered for a little good as well as for much evil. Take your friend's dowry to her; it is the price of the service in Rose Pompadour which I have just ordered."

The marchioness faded softly from Winnie's sight. She was sitting there in the summer-house at the Trianon, but whether in the eighteenth or the nineteenth century she could not tell. An open book lay in her lap, and she read Montesquieu's description of courts and courtiers.

"Ambition amid indolence, baseness amid pride, the desire to grow rich without toil, aversion from truth, flattery, treason, perfidy, neglect of all engagements, contempt for the duties of a citizen, fear of virtue in the prince-

hope in his weakness, and more than all that, the ridicule constantly thrown upon virtue, form, I trow, the characteristics of the greatest number of courtiers."

"I know that it's a true picture of that age," said Winnie, talking to herself. "Pompadour herself was all that, but she was not so absolutely heartless as Louis. When she knew that she must die, she dressed herself in her court robes and met death bravely, while he watched the hearse which bore her away through the pitiless storm with the light remark, 'The marchioness has bad weather for her little journey.' It was kind of her to think of poor little Rose, and not to send me away empty-handed. I shall always remember that act with gratitude."

"What nonsense are you talking?" asked Tib, for it was Tib who sat beside her quietly sketching.

"Dear, dear!" moaned Winnie, "and it was all a dream about the Sèvres china, and my hands are empty, after all."

"Why, no, they are not," Tib replied. "What are you holding so tightly? Only a bit of broken china?"

Winnie gave one careless, then an astonished

glance at the scrap of porcelain which she held. "It is Sèvres!" she exclaimed—"real Rose Pompadour; and see here is part of the monogram of the marchioness in delicate gold letters and a tiny spray of blue forget-me-not! Tib, it's a piece of the very cup which she threw on the floor before my eyes."

"Winnie, if you don't come to your senses I'll send for the doctor and have a strait-jacket put upon you."

"Oh, Tib, you dear old thing, of course you can't understand, but if I hadn't wept for joy just then my dream might have lasted a little longer, and instead of holding just this little scrap I would have been carrying an entire tea service into the Trianon for the marquise, or maybe I would have been coming out with a *billet de banque* for Rose. Oh, why, why didn't I keep on dreaming just the least bit longer?"

Tib closed her sketch-box with a snap. "Come home, Winnie, and go to bed, and let me put some chopped ice on your head. Either you are as mad as a March hare, or you are not quite awake."

"That may be the case," Winnie replied

docilely; "but in that case this bit of china will presently vanish into thin air; for it is a part of my dream."

"Try to remember what you were doing before you went to sleep," Tib replied authoritatively as they walked homeward. "That bit of porcelain is no figment of your imagination. Did you pick it up back of the Trianon? If so, perhaps it really is a fragment of a cup that once belonged to the Marquise de Pompadour."

"Oh, there is no doubt about it at all!" Winnie replied confidently; "but I did not pick it up here. Let me see, where did I find it? I remember now. Boulette was playing with it in the garden. It must be a piece of that set which his mother thought the Prussians carried away to Germany. But they could not have carried *all* away if Boulette found this piece in the garden. Perhaps they wantonly destroyed the entire set. If so, there must be more pieces where this came from. I must find Boulette at once and make him tell me."

Unfortunately Winnie met Rose and her mother as she entered the garden, and communicated her surmises before finding Boulette.

If she had found him first, in her tactful way she would at once have ascertained all that he knew; but madame recognized the fragment of porcelain, and the two women were quite wild with excitement. Madame seized Boulette by the shoulders and shook him violently, promising him a good whipping, and ordering him to tell what he had done with the china. Rose also added her protestations, entreaties, and threats something in this way:

"Was there ever such a rascal? Know, stupid as a cabbage, that it is my dowry which you have found and have hidden. Ah, you will not tell where it is, then? The malicious one! *Croque Mitaine* will carry you away in his baggage. Ah, you do not believe in *Croque Mitaine?* Little infidel, dare you tell me, then, that the *petit Jésus* will not make pimples come on your nose, for example? How wicked he is, that one! I will make you no pan-cakes—no, not I; nor bring you any *pain d'épice* from the fête at St. Cloud. Ah, you weep! Gourmand! You have no heart, but you have, then, a stomach. No, you will not give me the china? You do not believe that I will give you the *pain d'épice.* You have,

then, no natural affection, no religion. Little monster, we will see what the law will do! Seek, then, a *gens d'arme*, put him in prison; he is worse than an anarchist—he is a pig."

Boulette shrieked with terror, but made no attempt to divulge any information in regard to the china.

"Let him alone," Winnie interceded. "I do not believe he knows anything about it. This is probably the only piece he has. Is it not so, Boulette?"

Boulette nodded mendaciously.

"He knows not to speak the truth," his mother replied; "it is a low-born, low-bred son of a *canaille*, the child of brigands, fit only for the galleys," and she proceeded to heap epithets upon her offspring and upon all his relatives, not apparently realizing that she included herself in these back-handed compliments.

Winnie left the group quite disappointed, but after dinner she came out upon the terrace with a saucer of strawberries, and beckoned to Boulette, whom she saw at a window, to join her.

"See, Boulette," she said, "we will have a little feast together. You set your little table, and I will put a strawberry on each plate."

Boulette fell into the trap at once. He started on a run and vanished around the corner of the house. Winnie followed and peeped around the syringa-bush. Boulette was kneeling by the mouth of a drain which the droppings of rain-water from the roof had worn under the rose-bush, and which emptied lower down from the side of the terrace.

Winnie could only see his golden head above the embankment, but she had no doubt that he had gone to the cave where he concealed his treasures. She stole back quietly to Boulette's table, and when he returned with something mysteriously wrapped in his blouse, she controlled herself admirably. Boulette withdrew his hand and placed some bits of china at regular intervals on the table. Winnie covered them with her strawberries, which Boulette ate with appreciation. At the close of the feast Boulette, completely won over, allowed her to examine the scraps of china, and even voluntered to let her have them if she would protect him from his mother and Rose. To Winnie's great joy they were identical with the piece which had aroused her curiosity. Boulette was a shrewd little fellow, however, and seeing that

Winnie was anxious to obtain them, he intimated that she could have more for more strawberries. A strawberry for each piece of china, irrespective of its size, was Boulette's stipulation, to which Winnie agreed with delighted alacrity. She ran into the house and brought out a pan of berries, while Boulette betook himself to his Ali Baba's cave. Feelings of delicacy restrained her from following him for a few moments, but as Boulette's absence was prolonged she finally sought him.

What was her horror to find him seated in the drain calmly smashing up a beautiful cup with a brick. She seized the offending infant by the arm, and forgetful of everything but her indignation at such vandalism, boxed his ears. Boulette burst into a howl of surprise rather than pain.

"Mademoiselle said little pieces, big pieces, all same one strawberry," he said, much aggrieved, and Winnie recognized the method in his madness.

"No, no, Boulette," she wailed; "I will give you more, many more strawberries for the big pieces. Where are they? You haven't broken them all up, surely?"

"No," Boulette replied doubtfully; "but these were all—only one cup, and now they are so many pieces I can't count. Would you give five, six, fifty strawberries for one cup?"

"Child, child, your sister was right; you are a prodigy of iniquity. But where are the rest?"

"In the hole," he replied, and stooping down Winnie looked into the drain. She could see a wicker basket, in the side of which was a large, ragged opening, which Boulette had widened with a stick. This stick had a hook at the end of it, and he was about to show her how he was in the habit of thrusting it in and rattling it about until the hook caught in the handle of a cup, which he would then drag out. Many of the other pieces had evidently been broken in this process, and he had not been able to remove saucers or plates. Winnie took away his stick and led him into the house, where she left him in the custody of Mrs. Smith. This was quite as much for his own safety as for that of the china, for she feared for Boulette when his mother and sister knew the extent of his misbehaving. The family gathered around the rose-bush, which it was found necessary to dig

up with great caution, as its roots had interlaced themselves about the basket. They understood now why Rose's grandfather had busied himself with planting that rose bush on the day when the Prussians were approaching Versailles, for this was no make-believe of Van's, like the hidden pearls. The former owner of the house had really buried here his precious china and the rose was simply to mark the spot.

Thanks to Boulette's effective prodding, not one of the twenty-one pieces had escaped quite uninjured. Rose wrung her hands in despair, and her mother was loud in her denunciation of Boulette. But for him the service might have been sold for enough to give Rose her dowry, and now no one would give a penny for that trash.

Winnie calmed her, and even changed her mourning into joy by assuring her that Mrs. Van Silver would find a winter's amusement in mending the pieces, and offering her on the spot the five hundred francs which the lady had left for just such an opportunity. She conditioned the purchase on Boulette's free pardon. "The child was utterly ignorant of the

harm he was doing," she pleaded; "besides" —and this argument had its force—"instead of your being able to obtain more, had it not been for his explorations, you would never have known of the existence of the china."

"There is something uncanny about the whole business," Adelaide said. "Really, Winnie, it seems as if you had been 'dreaming true' this time, for, as the marquise told you, the roses on the china were so natural that when planted a real rose-tree apparently sprang from them, and if she had not founded the Sèvres manufactory Rose would not have obtained her dowry."

CHAPTER VIII.

MESDAMES DE FRANCE, THE DAUGHTERS OF LOUIS XV.

LOUIS XV., one of the most worthless kings who ever wore a crown, was blessed with a lovely wife and with a large family of good and loving children.

Marie Leczinska was a Polish princess before she became Queen of France. Her marriage was considered a very glorious one, but it brought her little happiness except in her children. The dauphin was an admirable and affectionate prince, his sisters were sweet and dutiful girls, loving not only their estimable mother, but lavishing respect and tenderness on their father as well. They were the queen's only

joy and consolation, and they prompted the only pure affection which Louis XV. ever entertained, bringing out all that was best in his nature; so that it may be truthfully said that these young girls formed an oasis of purity, affection, and joy in the midst of a desert of heartlessness and corruption.

Louis XIV., with all his extravagance, his bombast, and despotism, was yet what he most desired to be, *le Grand Monarque.* He made his reign an epoch of splendor, and he left palaces and gardens to the nation such as France had never possessed. It was true that this was done by means of taxes ruinous alike to private property and to the State, but France has something still to show for this expenditure, while under Louis XV. the taxes were continued, and the money was squandered on his own vices and those of the nobles. The king knew that such a state of things could not continue, but if they could only hold together throughout his little, selfish life, it was all he cared for. "After us the deluge" was the motto of the time.

In the midst of all this whirlpool of vice the queen walked stately and dignified, gentle and

kind to her worst enemies, hiding her grief, extending a cheerful courtesy to all; so that even her husband, who so greatly wronged her living, gave her when she died the best eulogy that a wife ever received, in the remark: "This is the first time that she ever gave me pain."

Tib loved to paint the court ladies of this period, and especially the portraits of the daughters of Louis XV. by Nattier. They hung in the Attique Chimay, and are very charming in their quaint hooped petticoats and long, straight stays. Whenever, in their readings, any mention was made of the mesdames of France, as the French princesses are called, Tib eagerly jotted it down; and one day she surprised her friends by saying that she had combined her gleanings in a study of the period, using Adelaide's conceit of the tear of the aloe, and fancying Adelaide herself transplanted by its magic—Adelaide Armstrong no longer, but Madame Adelaide, the haughty and talented daughter of Louis XV.

TIB'S STORY.

When Adelaide touched her eyelids with the amulet, she imagined that only the period

would be changed, but that she would still find herself in the palace of Versailles. What was her surprise to see that she was sitting on the side of a cot bed in a plain dormitory containing a number of other such beds. The walls were bare of any decoration excepting a great black crucifix at the end of the room. Three other young girls, whom she recognized at once as the princesses—Madame Victoire, Madame Sophie, and Madame Louise—were in the room. Sophie was studying in the embrasure of a window; Victoire, curled up comfortably on one of the cots, with all the pillows from the other beds tucked about her, was eating an apple; Louise was looking at the pictures in an illuminated missal.

"Why are we not at Versailles?" Adelaide asked, rubbing her eyes. "This prison-like place is not fit for the daughters of the King of France."

"That is the twenty-seventh time you have made that remark to-day," Victoire replied, "and it is as true as the question is unanswerable. Mother said that we were to be educated at the convent of Fontevrault, because the court was not a proper place in which to bring up young girls."

"Then, why is it that our sisters, the twins Elizabeth and Henriette, are not here also?"

"I suppose because they are no longer young girls, but young ladies. As for myself, I would not mind staying here if they would only give us enough to eat. I am hungry all the time. I stole these apples while we were taking our exercise. Think of that! A princess of France reduced to steal, when at Versailles we have all the *potager* of La Quintinie and the orangery as well at our disposition. Mother would have boxes sent us if she knew how we were treated. I have written her, but I believe my letters have been confiscated. Either that is true, or else she has sent us things, and the nuns have eaten them."

"Hush! do not say that," said Sophie, looking apprehensively around; "you do not know who may be listening."

"Pooh! who's afraid?" exclaimed Adelaide. "They shall treat us properly, or the *king* shall know it."

A stern woman dressed in a religious garb entered as Adelaide spoke and fixed her keen eyes upon the princess. Adelaide tossed her head haughtily, but said nothing. The nun

turned slowly from her and scrutinized the other girls. Sophie was trembling so violently that she could scarcely hold her book. Victoire, who had been hurriedly hiding her apples in the bed-clothes, was choking in the vain attempt to swallow a large morsel which she had just bitten off. Little Louise alone walked up to the stern woman quite unafraid, and placed her hand caressingly in that of the nun's. "Sister Celeste," she said, "I thank you for lending me your pretty missal. May I not have another to look at?"

The nun placed her arm kindly around Louise, but did not answer her. She had discovered Victoire's predicament, and ordered her to show what she was hiding. The girl delivered up her stolen fruit and burst into tears.

"Madame Victoire," said Sister Celeste sternly, "you have committed two, nay three sins: theft, disobedience to your superiors, and gluttony. Go to the chapel and pray for forgiveness until you are told that you may come away." Victoire turned white, but she dared not disobey.

"You dare not send me to the chapel," Adelaide muttered sullenly.

"I shall send you when I think you deserve it," replied Sister Celeste; but each, while she glared at the other, was afraid to go any farther. The nun left the room; Sophie, although she knew that the nun had gone, remained, trembling and silent, but Louise ran to Adelaide and said:

"Why did you let her send Victoire to the chapel? You know that it terrifies her out of her senses to go there. The dead nuns are buried under the floor, and she has to kneel on the stones that bear their names, and sometimes, she says, she hears them moaning in their graves."

Sophie gave a little cry of horror, but Adelaide replied shortly: "That is absurd. They are dead, are they not? They have no longer any lungs or breath to moan with. All they could do would be to rattle their bones in their coffins, and no good nun would be so wanting in respect as to frighten a royal princess in that way. But it is an indignity, and I will go to the mother superior and demand that Victoire be recalled."

Adelaide had reason to hope for success in this mission, for in spite of her domineering

manners the mother superior was fond of her and granted her many favors. On one occasion Adelaide's dancing-master had attempted to teach her a fashionable dance called the "*Menuet Rose.*" "I do not think rose a pretty color," Adelaide had said. "I will not learn the dance unless you change its name to the *Menuet Bleu.*"

The dancing-master had argued that he had not named the dance, that it was so called at court, and that no one would know what was meant if she said that she danced the *menuet bleu.*

Adelaide was on her high horse and refused to take her steps.

The dancing-master, feeling his dignity affronted, appealed to the mother superior, and was surprised to receive the following decision:

"As it is always regarded as an honor for an author to receive royal patronage, you will convey to the author or contriver of this minuet that Madame Adelaide has honored him with her patronage and favor in giving him her permission to name this dance the '*Menuet Bleu de Madame Adelaide,*' and that it shall always be danced at her festivals under that name, no

matter what it may be called at other places and by other persons."

Adelaide had carried her point in regard to the minuet, as she always did with the indulgent mother superior; but on this particular occasion she was disappointed to find that the mother was not in the convent, and Sister Celeste, who was next in authority, would not listen to her.

"Then I shall go to the chapel and keep Victoire company," Adelaide exclaimed in pique, and she sped away, greatly incensed.

The chapel was in a lonely part of the convent garden, close to the outer wall, and it was growing dark—the shrubs and clipped trees in the gathering dusk took on weird shapes; but Adelaide was not at all frightened until, on opening the chapel-door, she saw that Victoire was lying on the floor in a fainting-fit. She ran to her, placed her head upon her lap, chafed her hands, and called upon her frantically. After a time Victoire opened her eyes. "Oh, sister!" she exclaimed, "the spirits were not only moaning, they shrieked and called to me."

"No, no, Victoire," Adelaide replied soothingly; "you imagined the cries; it could have

been nothing but the grating of the rusty weather-cock or the hoots of some owl in the forest."

"Listen, listen! there are the cries again;" and Victoire clung to her sister spasmodically as a human voice was heard groaning, and finally shrieking half-articulate sentences, in which prayers for mercy were broken by demoniac laughter. The sounds seemed to come from the vaults below, and at times drew nearer, and at others died away.

"Come, Victoire, back to the convent with me. You shall not stay longer in this terrible place."

"Did Sister Celeste say that I might leave?"

"No; but what difference does that make?"

"Then I dare not go."

"I will go and make her come and listen to these terrible sounds."

"No; do not leave, oh sister! do not leave me."

Adelaide was puzzled, but when the cries recommenced she commanded the evil spirits to be silent in as loud and authoritative a tone as she could muster. Instead of obeying her, the voice broke forth into wild imprecations, and

there was plainly to be heard a rattling of chains. Victoire shrieked in her turn, but Adelaide was still unafraid, though equally superstitious. "The spirit does not like to be spoken to so harshly," she said. "The nuns were reading us the story of David the other day, how he exorcised the evil spirit that had taken possession of Saul by playing on his harp. Let us see if the nuns have left their instruments in the little gallery. If they have, I will do the David act."

Adelaide climbed into the musicians' gallery, and found that the great bass viol had been left in its place. She was an expert musician, playing all instruments, as Madame Campan tells us, from the *cor de chasse* to the jew's-harp; and presently the chapel echoed with sounds only a little less lugubrious than the cries which had excited Victoire's terror. But while she played the unhappy spirit was quiet. Whenever she paused to rest, it was heard again querulously complaining, and she sawed away, playing everything which she could think of, from chants to jigs, and improvising when her repertory was exhausted.

It had grown quite dark now, but finally a

light was seen twinkling through the garden. The mother superior had returned. Little Princess Louise had found her, and had persuaded her to send for her sisters. The terrific cries were afterward explained to be those of a maniac who was confined in a hut built outside the garden-wall, but close to that of the chapel. But, in spite of this knowledge, Victoire never recovered from the fright which she had received. She was very amiable, but to the last day of her life was timid and superstitious. Their life apart from the world was having its effect on the two younger girls as well. Sophie was growing up with an aversion to society: she loved to be alone, and was silent and uncommunicative, while Louise was fast becoming a real *dévote*. She loved the nuns and enjoyed hearing the legends of the saints and martyrs. Though naturally cheerful and gentle, she had a great admiration for heroism, and complained that she was only a princess and could never do anything remarkable. Adelaide alone was driven by the religious life into a spirit of revolt. She was an excellent scholar, and mastered her tasks with great care, but she defied all discipline; and when a royal command was

brought to the convent that the princesses should be sent to Versailles for the wedding festivities of their sister Elizabeth, who was to be married to the Infant, the son of Philip V. of Spain, Adelaide gravely bade good-by to the mother superior and the nuns, assuring them that she would not return.

She was delighted to find herself once more at Versailles. The stately wedding ceremonies pleased her immensely; and while Madame Sophie, with her unconquerable shyness, whenever she was obliged to walk down the long *galerie des glaces*, lined with courtiers, always looked from one side to another, like a startled hare, to avoid meeting directly the gaze of any one, Adelaide paced haughtily along, staring at the noblest with the utmost arrogance. On one occasion she took it upon herself to reprimand a priest whom she thought celebrated mass with too lordly a manner. "Remember your position," she said; "such airs would be only suitable to a bishop." The king, her father, was amused by her domineering manner. "She carries herself as though she were *le Grand Monarque*. She shall not go back to the convent if she does not please to do so."

The three other princesses returned dutifully, but Adelaide promised them that they should soon be released. Her first move in the direction of their liberty was to persuade her father to have their portraits painted by the artist Nattier, as a surprise for their mother. "If their portraits are here," she argued wisely, "they are so pretty that they will be their own best advocates, and my father will grow to love them and long for them." These portraits still attract the admiration of the visitor to Versailles. We know how they pleased the queen from a letter which she wrote to the Duchesse de Luynes, October 12th, 1747:

"The king surprised me by showing me the portraits of my daughters from Fontevrault. I did not know that they had been painted. The two eldest are really beautiful, but I have never seen anything so agreeable as the little one. She has an affecting expression very remote from sadness. I have never seen anything so singular; she is touching, sweet, spiritual."

In time the portraits and Adelaide's own entreaties effected the return of her sisters. In the mean time, she devoted herself to her elder sister, Henriette, a lovely princess, beautiful

Henriette de Bourbon Conti.

alike in face and in character. Nattier has painted her portrait also, and represented her leaning against a tripod on which half-extinguished torches are smoking. It is possible that the artist was thinking of the princess's life when he planned this detail of the picture, for her vital flame only flickered for a short time after the portrait was painted. Bonhomme writes of her: "Delicate, tall, and slender, there was something dreamy and inspired in her person. Her mild, pure features, aristocratic in their outline, charmed and yet inspired respect; her smile was melancholy, and her whole appearance, in which gloom seemed constantly warring against brightness, bore the impress of fatality. Looking into her great, dreamy eyes, which seemed to reflect the dormant limpidity of great lakes, one divined what abysses of tenderness and devotion were hidden underneath."

She was passionately attached to her twin-sister, and missed her sadly when she went away to Spain. Adelaide would have loved to have taken Elizabeth's place, but this was not possible. Adelaide soon guessed, too, that her sister's melancholy had still another cause.

She was tenderly beloved by the young Duc de Chartres, a brave, accomplished, and amiable young man. Madame Henriette loved him in return, but Louis XV. did not favor their marriage for political reasons. The Duc de Chartres would, on the death of his father, become the Duc d'Orleans. The first noble of France, if he married the princess, Madame Henriette, who was a distant cousin, he might some day aspire to the throne of France. It was throwing too much power, too great a temptation into the hands of the Orleans family. Louis' advisers, especially the nobles of the houses of Condé and Conti, who were jealous of Orleans' ascendency, advised him against this alliance. The Prince de Bourbon Conti had still another reason for not wishing the marriage to take place. He wanted the Duc de Chartres for his own son-in-law. He had a very beautiful and very coquettish daughter, who bore the same name as that of the princess. If the young duke fancied the name of Henriette, was not Henriette de Bourbon Conti as musical as Madame Henriette de France? He counselled the king against making the house of Orleans too powerful, but he was at heart eager to ally it

with the house of Bourbon in a way that should make it possible for a descendant of his own to conspire for the throne, as really happened in the succeeding reign, when Philippe Egalité, Duc d'Orleans, son of this very union, was Louis XVI.'s bitterest foe.

The young Duc de Chartres obtained an audience with Louis XV., and manfully asked him for the hand of his daughter. The king made his refusal as kind as possible, but it was unalterable, and the loving princess faded gently away. She was present at the marriage of the Duc de Chartres to her beautiful rival. The marriage was not a happy one, and the duke must have often regretted that he did not remain constant to the memory of that first pure affection.

Elizabeth returned to France, and visited at Versailles with her Spanish husband, to the great joy of her sister Henriette. It was her last happiness, for she died four years later, and Elizabeth came again to weep over her best-loved sister. They loved each other all their lives with an affection unusual even between sisters, and they were not divided in death, for the Infanta, on her next visit to her family,

was taken with smallpox, and dying, was buried in St. Denis, close beside her sister.

After the death of his twin daughters the king's heart opened more toward his remaining four. He gave them the old apartments of Madame de Montespan, just beneath his own. There was a secret staircase between his own room and that of Madame Adelaide, and the king frequently descended in the evening and made coffee, while Adelaide would arrange a little supper for him. On such occasions she always pulled a bell-rope in her own room, which communicated with a bell in Madame Victoire's, who sent the invitation on to Madame Sophie, who, in turn, rang for Madame Louise, and the princesses would gather in Adelaide's room for an informal evening with their father. It was the best trait that Louis XV. possessed, this slight affection for his daughters. He gave them nicknames. Adelaide, who was punctilious in matters of dress, he called in derision, *Graille* (Ragamuffin); Victoire, who was fat and lazy, as well as fond of good eating, he name *Coche* (Piggy); Sophie, who was so shy that a breath might blow her away, was *Chiffe* (Snippet); and Louise, whom he really loved

best of all, was *Loque* (Trash or Good-for-nothing). This was in mockery of her well-known desire to do something sublime. All of the girls accepted their names as proofs of their father's fondness, and most nobly did Ragamuffin, Piggy, and Snippet repay it. The king allowed them to have a reader, a young girl of fifteen, who later became famous as Madame Campan. She was very accomplished, but modest as well, and she writes that she never forgot her first interview with the king. Louis was passing through the room with a train of nobles, on his way to a hunt, and noticing the little governess, he stared at her, and remarked: "They say that you are very learned, that you speak five or six foreign languages. Is it true?"

"Oh, no, sire, only English and Italian."

"Do you speak those fluently?"

"Yes, sire."

"Quite enough," replied the king—"quite enough to drive any husband mad;" and the entire party left the room laughing loudly, much to the confusion of the little reader.

She was needed by the princesses, for though Adelaide, who was fond of study, and had become

what was considered at that time a prodigy of learning, the others had been sadly neglected at the convent, and were very ignorant. Madame Louise had made the nuns read to her, and could scarcely read herself. Sophie had grown more and more reserved and taciturn ; only a thunder-storm, of which she was excessively afraid, could induce her to seek the society of other people.

The queen, though sweet and amiable, was not herself highly educated. She was fond of art, and attempted to study painting, but had no talent, and her teacher finally contented himself with designing a series of screens, sketching in the decorative figures, and allowing the queen to fill in the outlines with color. All the shading, the drawing of the faces and hands, were done by the teacher. He even directed the queen at her work, telling her what colors to choose, and went over the result when her lesson was over, correcting her mistakes. And yet the queen imagined that she had done it all, and left the paintings to a friend in her will, as she knew they would be prized as specimens of her own work.

After the queen died, Louise confided to her father her heart's desire. It was that she might

be permitted to take the veil as a Carmelite nun. The king deliberated some time, and at length gave his consent. It was a secret between the father and his youngest daughter. Madame Louise went away as though to take a simple drive, but she never returned, and the news was brought to her sisters, after all was over, that she had taken the irrevocable vows as a nun. She had always loved the convent life, and she felt that in abandoning the world and all its pomps she had at last done something heroic.

Adelaide was very indignant that she had not been informed of this step when it was only contemplated, and raged in her old royal way. "Marriage and death and the convent have taken my sisters away from me," she said. "In which way will you leave me?"

"We will never leave you," said Victoire and Sophie, and there were tears in Victoire's kind eyes, and Sophie grew unwontedly caressing. "We will never leave either you or our father."

They were true to their promise. When the terrible smallpox, of which he died, attacked the king, Carlyle tells us that "Mesdames the

princesses alone waited at the loathsome sick-bed. The three princesses, Graille, Chiffe, and Coche, as he was wont to name them, are assiduous then, when all have fled. The fanatic princess Loque, as we guess, is already in the nunnery, and can only give her orisons. Poor Graille and sisterhood, withered ancient women! In the wild tossings that yet await your fragile existence be this always an assured place in your remembrance, for the act was good and loving! To us also it is a little sunny spot in that dismal howling waste where we hardly find another."

Tib imagined that Adelaide did not weep even at this terrible death-bed, or later, when Sophie died in convulsions of terror from a demonstration made by the gravediggers of Paris just before the Revolution. The shadow of a great storm was gathering around them: it was an escape for timid Sophie to be called before the worst. Tib imagined that Madame Adelaide's heart grew more tender than history gives it credit; that, like the kindly Victoire, she grew at length to love the young queen, Marie Antoinette, whom at first she had misunderstood and disliked Madame Victoire had loved her from

the first indeed, and had given her as one of her wedding presents the key to that secret staircase, so that Marie Antoinette might visit them informally and privately, as their father had been accustomed to do. Marie Antoinette was much touched by this attention, and frequently visited her husband's aunts, though their constant advice to her to maintain more etiquette could not have been wildly entertaining. "Embroidery, small scandal, prayers, and vacancy" made up the round of their existence, says one caustic historian; though Madame Adelaide sometimes took up her violin and played for the queen's amusement; and we may be sure that the *petits soupers* of Madame Victoire were not less toothsome than when a younger appetite may have made them seem so. They must have warned her, too, of the Duc d'Orleans, son of the woman who supplanted their sister.

Louis XVI. was fond of his aunts, and gave them a villa at Bellevue when they grew weary of the palace. Later, when urged to flee while there was yet time to escape, he refused to do so until he could first provide for their flight. They were safely out of the country in Rome

when their nephew and his lovely wife were caught in that great maelstrom which drew them down to their death ; and there and then Tib imagined the iron must have at last entered Madame Adelaide's proud heart, and that at last she wept.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUEEN'S DOUBLE.

IF there is ever an enchanted garden on earth it is *Le Petit Trianon.* It is hardly a garden properly so called, but an exquisite little park, so artfully artless, so skilfully planned in the naturalistic style by its first designers—the architect Mique, the painter Hubert Robert, the sculptor Deschamp, and the gardener Antoine Richard—that it does not seem to have been planned at all, but to be a bit of Eden left over from the Paradise.

Modern research tells us that this design was due, far more than the world has suspected, to Marie Antoinette herself. When the king gave

her *Le Petit Trianon* it had only an Italian garden and the wild park beyond. The queen did not alter the little palace or the Italian garden, but she busied herself at once with the park. She was weary of formality, of the magnificence and art of the great vistas, of the rows of gilded statues, the tremendous spouting fountains, of the clipped trees, of the formal parterres, and of the long *allées*. There must be nothing here to suggest the palace out of doors. When she came to Trianon it was to get near to nature's heart and away from royalty and etiquette. It was this supreme desire of her soul rather than any fancy for a new fashion in gardening which led her to plan a so-called "English garden," a bit of ground which should imitate the beauties of nature as Nature herself sometimes revealed them in the parks of England.

The ground was not diversified or picturesque to begin with, but the queen's talented coterie of assistants planned together harmoniously to turn the little river in graceful windings, to throw up rocky ledges and dig fern-tapestried ravines, to plant trees just as they might have posed for Watteau's or Boucher's *Fêtes Cham-*

An Opera of Lully's at the Trianon.

pètres. They threw in a meadow here, a cascade there, a wild ramble with a scramble over rocks and across rustic bridges to a hill-top, from which a wide-stretching view could be obtained of the country—always the wild, uninhabited country; they framed the picture with apparently illimitable forest, and finally, since there must be lodges in this wilderness, they made them as picturesque, as rustic, and as simple as possible.

Nothing can be more charming than the "hamlet," the tiny village of a half dozen thatch-roofed cottages, where Marie Antoinette and her ladies played at peasant life. It was such an innocent, sweet play. If only the infuriated populace who would have no more royalty in France could have left her here, in one of these huts, with her husband and children, how gladly would she have given up all the rest!

But no human life can be devoted wholly to any play, however innocent in its seeming, and fulfil a noble career; and it was because the kings of France had given themselves up to selfish indulgence, instead of doing the work laid upon them by their high position, that

Louis XVI. and his lovely wife were called to expiate their sins.

Winnie had been studying the life of the unfortunate queen, and had been working of late in her state bed-chamber, in the *grands appartements* at Versailles, copying her portrait which hangs there, one of the many painted by Madame Vigée Lebrun.

Though her head is loaded by the immense cushion over which her powdered hair is drawn, and by the more enormous velvet hat, with its topping plumes, the face is sweet and very winsome. Madame Lebrun's friendship for Marie Antoinette may have led her to soften the Austrian features, but the expression of gentleness and sweetness must have been there, for it illumines every one of her portraits. Winnie had studied the painting so faithfully that she could see it plainly with her closed eyes—every trait, every tint were there. She held in her hand Madame Lebrun's souvenirs, and had been reading all the personal reminiscences of the gracious and thoughtful acts which the queen lavished on her artist friend.

She had read the story of the necklace, of the simple and straightforward way in which the

virtuous queen walked in the midst of plots and pitfalls, calumny and lies; between the insensate hatred of the people, who visited upon her the sins of the monarchs of preceding reigns, from whom she was not even descended, and the cold, repellent suspicion of the aristocracy, who refused to accept the gentle stranger as one of them. Winnie could not quite forgive *Mesdames Tantes* — Adelaide, Victoire, and Sophie—grown from positions of dependence to stately old princesses, for their unkindness to their niece, as she came to them a homesick little foreigner.

It seemed to Winnie that no one ever went more undeservingly to her doom, and her heart was hot with a great revolt.

"Oh! why was there not some one loving and clever enough to save her? If I had lived then I would have found some way to contrive it. I would have taken her place and died for her."

The tears started hot and blinding with the earnestness of her feeling, and on the impulse of the moment she opened the *bonbonnière* and touched her eyelids with the amulet. She had experienced its magical power often enough to

know what she was doing. She was deliberately stepping back a century; she would see Marie Antoinette as Madame Lebrun had seen her, and she would not desert her.

Her tears ended as always before in laughter. She was laughing heartily at what she hardly knew, but she was still standing there in the Trianon, with the Tower of Marlborough just before her and the Temple of Love, with its delicate, circular colonnade of Corinthian columns at her left. Ladies in the costume of the period were strolling about, and one was speaking to her. Winnie recognized the pretty face with the dark curling hair escaping from the muslin turban; it was Madame Vigée Lebrun, and she was about to call her by her name and to say, "I knew you from your portrait in the Louvre, the one which you painted of yourself, with your little girl in your arms," when suddenly all that faded out of her remembrance, and she knew why she was laughing. Madame Lebrun had taken her for the queen, and had asked her when she would return to the palace and give her another sitting for her portrait.

This was what had struck her as so amusing, that any one who knew the queen so well as

Madame Lebrun, who had painted her again and again, should have mistaken a young girl in a simple sprigged percale dress, with a gauze fichu and a straw hat trimmed with blue lute-string ribbon, for her Majesty, Marie Antoinette, Queen of France. It was too absurd, and Winnie laughed again; then feeling that she was hardly courteous, she explained: "I beg your pardon, but I am not the queen, I am only—" and to her own after surprise she did not say, "Winifred De Witt, an American art student," but the words seemed to form themselves, and she felt them to be perfectly true and natural as she uttered them—"only Gay d'Oliva, at your service, a poor girl of Paris. I came out to Versailles this morning with some friends because it is a fête day, and I heard that the queen held a fête here at Trianon, in imitation of a village fair, and that she admitted any well-behaved and neatly dressed girls to see the *divertissements*. I wanted to see the queen myself, and had no idea of being taken for her."

"You shall see the queen," said Madame Lebrun, "but it will seem to you like looking in the glass, for you are as alike as two peas. She is in the dairy now making butter with the

Princesse Lamballe, but she will come out presently to open the fête. See, there come the dauphin and Madame Royale driving her flock of ten goats.'' The merry children drove the little flock into a fold just outside the dairy, and a tall, graceful woman came out, bearing a small pail poised coquettishly on her head, and a three-legged milking-stool under her arm. She placed the stool beside one of the goats, seated herself and attempted to milk it, but the goat was mischievous, and shaking its bells, capered about the small enclosure. The children added to its wildness by chasing it with shouts of laughter, which presently brought the queen to the door of the dairy. Her shapely fingers were loaded with butter, which she transferred unconsciously to the shoulders of her children as she caressed them.

"Goats are the most mischievous of animals,'' said Madame Lebrun to the queen, "and I have often wondered how the painter Drouais managed to keep one quiet long enough to paint it in that portrait of his Majesty's royal brother and sister, I mean the painting of the Comte d'Artois and the Princesse Clotilde as children.''

"Oh! the Comte d'Artois is equal to any feat," said the queen, "and I have no doubt he held the goat still by main force, or charmed it into obedience."

The queen returned to the dairy as she spoke. Madame Lebrun followed her, and Winnie, or Gay d'Oliva, as we must now call her, waited for a time outside, and then, as neither the queen nor the artist appeared, she strolled away, interested in the little hamlet. It presented a gala appearance, with the pretty court ladies running up and down the rustic exterior staircases, or appearing on the balconies, or tripping across the greensward, dressed in their China-shepherdess costumes, their short skirts disclosing the daintiest of *chaussures*. Gay d'Oliva viewed it all with a sort of stupid wonder, not touched with the sympathy and admiration which Winnie had fancied she would feel before just this scene.

When the Princesse Lamballe left the fold, quite worsted in her encounter with the goats, her milking pail half filled with earth, her pretty sprigged gown torn, and her face blotted with spatters of mud, as well as with tiny black patches, Gay d'Oliva grinned maliciously. It

served her right, she thought; if a great lady so demeaned herself, let her take the consequences. The princess wore a black velvet band about her fair throat, that "hind's neck," as Carlyle called it, from its slender length and the arch with which it carried the stately head, whose eyes were like those of a gentle fawn. The band had the effect of detaching the head from the body, and indeed the aristocratic face, with its powdered hair crowned with a garland of pink roses, did not seem to belong with this milkmaid's costume. Gay d'Oliva was to see the same head with the same elaborate coiffure borne upon a pike by a howling mob before many months. She admired its owner more when that terrible time came than now, for it was well known that the princess had had abundant opportunity to escape, and had met her death because she would not leave the queen.

Not far from the cascade there was an imitation mill, its great wheel lumbering slowly round; and Gay strolled curiously toward this picturesque bit of stage scenery. The miller's wife had dusted herself with flour to look more exactly her part, and leaned out of a window

to watch one of the princes of the blood, who represented the miller, unload a bag of wheat from a donkey. The bag was very small, and behind it was perched the Duchesse de Polignac, costumed like a farmer's wife. "See, I have brought a bag of chestnuts from our grove for your children," she said laughing. The chestnuts were *marons glacé*, from one of the most fashionable confectioners of Paris, and the bag was of satin embroidered with gold.

Gay turned away quite disgusted with this child's play. A little farther on the meadow was transformed to represent a country fair. Booths were ranged around, joined to each other by garlands of flowers, and at each presided some noble lady of the court. Here Madame Elizabeth, the sister of the king, was pretending to sell sausages and little meat pies decorated with paper flowers to the real peasants, who were now flocking into the grounds. In reality the mock *charcutière* gave away the toothsome little packages to every one who approached her booth, and in consequence was very soon sold out, and took her place among the dancers at the Grange.

At another table the Comtesse de Chalons

was dispensing gingerbread to the children. Monsieur de Vandreuil was beating a great drum in front of the merry-go-round. The Comtesse de Polastron sold long pipes and tobacco to the courtiers for a compliment or an impromptu poem, or gave them away to the peasants.

The elegant Madame Coigny presided over a lottery, awarding to dukes and counts such embarrassing prizes as pigs and geese, which they were obliged to carry away with them. There was a game of rings arranged under a Chinese pagoda, and the musicians of the French Guards, dressed as Chinese mandarins, played to attract patrons to the game.

The pretty Duchesse de Guiche told fortunes, and presently the queen herself took her place at the *café*, surrounded by twenty-one arbors, with little rustic chairs and tables, each one bearing over its arched front the name of a royal house. The royal barmaid served prince and peasant alike with beverages of their own choosing, the only return expected being that they should drink her health. The king came in, in the guise of a hunter, and indeed he had really been hunting in the neighboring forest,

and had brought back a fine bag of game, which he laid at the queen's feet, where he threw himself, quite wearied by his rough exercise, and amused by the parade which now defiled by the *café*. First came a procession representing the stock in trade of a bird fancier, and arranged by Carlin, the harlequin of the Comédie Italienne, and by Dugazon, of the Comédie Française. Hidden inside great birds of wicker work were concealed various actors of these theatres, who strutted about in the most fantastic attitudes, and finally mounted the pavilion and gave an amusing spectacle.

Then came a band of strolling players and musicians, who ensconced themselves in the same pavilion, and drew the plaudits of the crowd. Through their peasant disguises, those who knew them recognized in the flutist the Duc de Guines, and in the violinist the Comte de Polastron ; but who was this agile tight-rope dancer who pirouetted so gracefully on the slender cord and executed such intricate steps between eggs placed at close intervals ? The whisper ran from mouth to mouth that only a professional performer could dance like that, and that it must either be the expert, the Sieur

Placide, or that other king of the sawdust arena, "Le Petit Diable."

But no, the queen recognizes him, and has thrown him a flower, and the king is good-naturedly applauding and shouting, "Bravo, Charles!" It is his brother, the Comte d'Artois. Some time before he had brought the troupe of professional acrobats to Trianon to play before the queen, and she had greatly admired the feats of the gymnast, Le Petit Diable. From that time his friends were greatly puzzled by the mysterious conduct of the young Comte d'Artois. Every morning he refused himself to every one and gave himself up to some secret employment. Some said that he was practising the black art with the sorcerer Cagliostro, some that he was in love with some unknown lady; others hoped that he was becoming serious and giving his time to study. Now the secret was out. He had been taking lessons of Petit Diable in tight-rope dancing, and had equalled his master. He had spent all this time and pains to secure a smile of admiration from Marie Antoinette. He was the only member of the royal family except the king and Madame Elizabeth who was fond of her, and

the friendship of this light-headed youth could bring her no good in the eyes of the old noblesse or of the populace. Audacious though he was, and clever in keeping his foothold in other ticklish places, whether in play at Trianon or afterward as the King Charles X., he was always the same volatile, nimble-heeled mountebank.

Madame Lebrun joined Gay d'Oliva where she stood watching the tight-rope dancer with spellbound admiration. "He is clever, is he not?" said the artist. "The comte had always a talent for doing admirably all sorts of useless things. It is a trait which runs in the family. You should see the locks which the king makes at his forge, most charmingly *ciselées*. He has made some for the queen's apartment."

Alas! these locks, ornate as they were, could not keep out the Parisian mob, and there came a time when it would have been more to the purpose if the king had learned to pick locks rather than to forge them, for the bolts of the Temple, unornamented though they might be, were mercilessly strong.

The performance in the pavilion was over. The Duc de Guines and the Comte de Polastron

were led off to the Grange to play for the dancers, and the queen was opening the ball with a minuet. But the Comte d'Artois had not noticed that she had left, and mistaking Gay d'Oliva for her Majesty, bowed low before her, and kissing the flower which had been thrown him, murmured that this was his happiest day since the fête which his brother had been privileged to give her Majesty at Brunoy, when he had taken the part of one of the enchanted knights.

Gay regarded him with frank surprise, and Madame Lebrun burst into laughter. "She is like the queen, is she not?" she said to the discomfited count, who made all speed to take himself off as soon as he had discovered his mistake.

"You must sit for me, mademoiselle. I am painting a portrait of the queen," explained Madame Lebrun, "but her Majesty is so occupied that she cannot give me as many sittings as I would wish. Come to my studio in the Hôtel Tubert, and I will pay you well as model."

Gay accepted; she was poor and not over fastidious as to how she earned her livelihood. It was amusing to find that she resembled the

queen, and she was to have another adventure on this account this afternoon. As she was leaving the Trianon she noticed a gentleman, who seemed desirous of not being noticed, skulking in the shrubbery near the gate. He wore a slouched hat and a long cloak, but he lifted the one and threw the other aside as she passed him.

Gay knew from the obsequiousness of his bow that he, like so many others, had taken her for Marie Antoinette, and she laughed again at the absurdity of the mistake as she flitted out of the park. As she did so she brushed against a lady dressed in a shabby genteel fashion, as though she were one of the hangers-on at the court, who had not as yet been fortunate enough to secure the favor of royalty. The lady uttered an exclamation, first of deep apology, followed by one of surprise.

"Pardon, a thousand pardons, your Majesty! But no, phantom of the magicians! who are you, then?" and she turned and ran after Gay so briskly that she caught her before she had walked far toward Versailles on the public road.

"Who are you that could deceive the Cardi-

nal de Rohan and me as well?" and her sharp eyes pierced Gay d'Oliva through and through. "You are not the queen, but you are very like her. I do not wonder that the cardinal, lover though he is, was mistaken," and the strange lady laughed maliciously. "Yes, it was his eminence, I saw his red stockings under his cloak; the *concierge* concealed him there, he had been waiting an hour for the queen to pass out. He is more doting than ever, but she will not notice him. He will get nothing for his pains. It was a good joke, and if I ever have access to the queen's ear I will amuse her with it. Did you notice how bald his head was when he bowed? Ah, there is no fool like an old fool!" and the lady bowed in a manner exactly imitating the cardinal.

Gay felt a trifle confused and foolish. She did not understand the sequence of events as she would have done could she have looked on at the scene in her own person as Winnie, instead of taking part in it with only the limited intelligence of the girl of the people.

As Winifred De Witt she would immediately have recognized Cardinal Rohan, and have remembered all the intrigues of the necklace;

but Gay d'Oliva knew nothing of the story in which she was to be an important actor. We, however, will interrupt Winnie's dream to take advantage of our standpoint and understand the situation as it may be studied to-day in the histories of that time.

His Eminence Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan was in disgrace at court. While a younger man he had been ambassador to Vienna, where he had maintained great state, being served by "four and twenty pages of noble birth all in scarlet breeches" and a great retinue of followers. Here he set up as a man of fashion and a wit, and it was this last pretension which wrought his woe, for he had the recklessness to write in a despatch, "Maria Theresa stands, indeed, with the handkerchief in one hand, weeping for the woes of Poland, but with the sword in the other, ready to cut Poland in sections and take her share." This was considered very funny, and was repeated by Louis XV. and laughed at by the court. Marie Antoinette, then only dauphiness, heard it, and was deeply offended by this disrespect to her royal mother. When she became queen, and the car-

dinal returned from Vienna and presented himself at court, she refused to see him, and the king sent him a brief announcement that "he would be asked for when wanted."

For days, months, years he waited, and was not asked for; the inference was plain, he was not wanted. But for a prince, a cardinal to languish in such neglect was ruin. He bent every energy, he intrigued, bribed, gave dinners, toadied to the favorites of the queen, wrote unending letters, all to no purpose, and at last suborned the gatekeeper, and hiding in the garden of the Trianon endeavored to obtain a personal interview with the queen. In vain. She saw him indeed as she drove rapidly by on her return to Versailles with some of her ladies, and recognized him from his red stockings, but a mocking peal of laughter was the only attention vouchsafed him.

Louis de Rohan was doubtless furious at such treatment, but he had sunk the man in the courtier; he could forgive any insult, swallow any indignity, crawl and fawn and truckle if only he could succeed at last.

Every one knew of the cardinal's infatuation and despair, and among those to whom it was

an open secret was an adventuress, the Countess (?) Jeanne de La Motte, who with her husband were hangers-on of the court, and lived in an attic in the Hôtel Belle Image at Versailles, looking eagerly for some way of making their fortunes either by fair means or foul. The La Mottes were terribly poor, but sharp-witted. Cardinal de Rohan was rich, and gullible; the countess had met him in former days, for he had been a friend of her foster-mother, and had treated her kindly. Had he been in favor, he would doubtless have spoken a good word for her and obtained some lucrative official position for her at court.

How provoking that the only grandee who was well disposed to her should be in disgrace! Cardinal Rohan could do nothing for her. Wait, not so fast. What would not Cardinal Rohan give to the individual who could get him into favor with the queen? If she could accomplish that her fortune was made; and so the Countess La Motte struggled all the more desperately to obtain the ear of influential persons at court. She supported herself now by dressmaking. How many intrigues she stitched into the gold lace with which she bedecked

the court dresses of the fine ladies, her patronesses!

Doubtless at first she really intended to aid the cardinal, and only anticipated the power she intended to gain and to wield in his behalf when she called on his eminence, and informed him that success had at last come to her, that through the influence of powerful friends she now had her place at court, her apartment in the palace, and the friendship of the queen.

The cardinal believed her, and begged her to speak a good word for him. This the countess good-naturedly promised to do. She would even carry his letters to the queen, and thereupon there began a famous correspondence, Cardinal Rohan writing and delivering to the Countess La Motte above two hundred letters, none of which of course ever reached their destination, though the countess pretended that they had all been favorably received by Marie Antoinette. At first the correspondence was extremely one-sided, the countess explaining that the queen preferred to send her answers verbally, for fear that letters might be intercepted. She assured the cardinal, however, that he was forgiven for his old offences, and

fully restored in her favor, but not as yet in that of the king. Moreover, there were certain cabals in the ministry which rendered it impolitic for the queen to allow him to be presented as yet publicly at court; he must be content with her secret friendship. The cardinal was overjoyed, and professed himself willing to wait indefinitely for his public restoration to favor, and in the mean time burned to serve her Majesty in any way.

The countess replied that the benevolent queen often received petitions for charity which she longed to grant, but that her revenue was narrow, her royal spouse being excessively cramped, not to say stingy, and if the cardinal would act as her almoner and relieve these cases of necessity, she hoped some day to be able to repay him. The deluded cardinal was only too delighted to lend the queen money for her charities, and the wicked Countess La Motte lived upon this money for many months. It was given whenever asked for, and the countess saw that if she could only really obtain the permission of the queen for his presentation at court, the cardinal would repay her most generously.

Unfortunately the only resident of the palace with whom the Countess La Motte had any intercourse was a duchess whose ball dresses she remodelled. The duchess cared no more for the countess dressmaker than for her cook, and there was no hope of reaching the queen's ear through her ; but while sewing in the duchess' apartment one of the queen's valets, named Desclos, had frequently brought her patroness notes from his royal mistress. The countess eyed these notes greedily. If she could only gain possession of one of them, she might imitate the queen's handwriting and carry still farther her deception of the cardinal.

Accordingly Countess La Motte exercised her utmost fascination over the valet, who, much flattered, became at first an acquaintance and later her accomplice. Desclos was willing to help, but he must be paid. It was not so easy, after all, for the countess to imitate the queen's autograph, but the count had a friend in the army, a skilful forger of notes and counterfeiter of handwriting, named Villette, and the aid of this rascal was now called in. Desclos gave the countess some of the royal stationery bearing the monogram of Marie Antoinette in gilt

and her seal, and on this note-paper Villette wrote the letters which the Countess La Motte dictated. The fraud was becoming more artistic, and for the time the cardinal was satisfied. His letters, with all their gallantry and devotion, hardly veiled his ambition. He was Grand Almoner of France, Prince of the House of Rohan, Bishop of Strasburg, Cardinal, Knight, Abbot, Principal of the Sorbonne, of immense income, brilliant, fascinating. There was only one more honor to be obtained, the office of Prime Minister, in whose power the king himself was but a puppet. He had studied the careers of Richelieu, of Mazarin; nothing less would satisfy him. It was in the power of the queen to raise him to this position if he could but turn her hatred to admiration. It was astonishing to him that the queen should not admire and love him, the favorite of all other ladies. More ardent became his letters, more eagerly he begged for public recognition and restoration to favor before the court.

This was the very favor which the countess could not bring about, but with the help of the royal valet, Desclos, something might be done. When the queen passed from her own apart-

ment in the morning down the long *Galerie des Glaces*, those courtiers who had the *entrée* of the palace were allowed to assemble in an adjoining apartment, called the *Galerie de l'œil-de-bœuf* (from a huge oval window supposed to resemble a bull's eye). The valet managed to station Cardinal Rohan here in a position where he could see the queen as she passed slowly down the grand gallery of the mirrors. He was told that in token of her regard Marie Antoinette would honor him with public recognition on this occasion. What Rohan did not know was the habit of the queen to always look into the *Galerie de l'œil-de-bœuf* as she walked by and to bow courteously to the nobles in waiting there. The queen had a very gracious way of saluting her friends. It is said that she could so glance from face to face, meeting the eyes fixed upon her with her own kindly glance and winsome smile, that twenty people would swear that each inclination of her stately head was meant for him personally.

According to her custom, the unsuspecting queen looked into the waiting-room, her eyes met those of the cardinal without any perception of his identity dawning upon her, she

smiled and bowed indiscriminately to him and to all who crowded forward for the favor, but the overjoyed Rohan believed that she had expected to see him, that her glance had sought him out, and that this public recognition meant a return to favor. Intoxicated with joy, he pressed forward to speak to her, but the queen had passed by, and the major-domo lowered his wand and waved him back. It was enough, privilege enough for the first time, and the cardinal hurried away unrecognized by that crowd of greedy, self-seeking men, each too much absorbed in his own ambitions to notice a man who had been so long a stranger at court that his face was unfamiliar.

The countess was succeeding so wonderfully that she began to believe in her own genius and in her lucky star which rendered it impossible for her to fail ; but with these new accomplices came the need for more money, and she determined to play for larger stakes. The sums with which the cardinal supposed he was from time to time obliging the queen were no longer sufficient for the countess' desires ; moreover, the count, her husband, was gambling, and was incessantly urging her for money, while the car-

dinal was now growing impatient for a private interview with the queen. It was at this juncture that the countess met a desperate man leaving the palace after a disappointing interview with royalty. It was Boehmer, the jeweller, who had constructed a fabulously beautiful and valuable diamond necklace--a necklace for which he had spent years in collecting the stones, and which he had ruined himself to purchase. He had borrowed money on every hand, the necklace was mortgaged over and over, but it was a wonder of the jeweller's craft. His hope, the ambition of his life, had been that the king would purchase it for the queen. Louis had shown it to his wife, and if she had manifested any desire for it, it would doubtless have been hers ; but Marie Antoinette knew the bankrupt condition of the treasury, and would not allow him to give her the glittering toy. "Your people need bread, sire," she had said simply ; "you must not purchase stones."

The affair was much talked about ; few praised the noble-hearted queen or pitied the frenzied jeweller. They were both considered fools by the light-minded courtiers. Cardinal Rohan himself mentioned the gossip to the countess

on the occasion of a call which he made her shortly after Boehmer's disappointment.

"I am grieved that the king should not have purchased that trifle for his lovely wife," he said; "but since she did not care for it—"

"But she is dying with longing for it," the countess contradicted, "and the king is too avaricious, too indifferent to her wishes to purchase it for her."

"Are you sure of this?" Cardinal Rohan asked.

"Her Majesty told me so herself," said the countess. "She longs to buy the necklace, and would be able to pay for it in instalments, but Boehmer will not be satisfied except by a large amount paid down." The countess spoke warily; she was angling for an enormous catch; would the bait attract and the line hold?

"I might be able to assist her Majesty," the cardinal exclaimed eagerly, "but I must have more than her assurance received at second-hand that such assistance would be agreeable to her. Tell the queen that there is nothing I will not do to serve her if she will tell me what she desires with her own lips."

The countess' eyes beamed with triumph. At

last she could give the cardinal the boon he desired. She assured him that Marie Antoinette had confessed her love for him, and would prove it by seeing him as often as he wished.

What was it that had emboldened the Countess La Motte to this supreme effrontery, to dare to sport with the character of an irreproachable queen, to promise what she knew it was impossible for her to obtain?

It was simply the memory of Gay d'Oliva's face, as she had seen it at the gate of the Trianon. Somewhere in Paris there existed the queen's double, a girl so exactly resembling Marie Antoinette that, if she could be bribed to act the part, the cardinal himself might be deceived. The countess believed that every one was as wicked as herself. She had bought Desclos and Villette; Rohan and she were each trying to buy the other, and she was certain that this poor girl also had her price, and it was now her constant occupation and that of the count to search for her.

Winnie had but lately read the story in history, she had also recently read with interest the souvenirs of Madame Lebrun, whose portrait of the queen she had copied. It is, there-

fore, not surprising that in her dream-life she combined the two, and while she imagined herself Gay d'Oliva, and moved, unconscious of any previous knowledge of how it was all to turn out, through the drama, acting the part with much the same feelings which her prototype may have experienced, she also sustained relations to Madame Lebrun, and acted in other historical events in which the real Gay d'Oliva had no part.

CHAPTER X.

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.

E will now turn from the pages of history to follow Winnie's dream-life. After her visit to the fête at the Trianon Winnie imagined that she presented herself at Madame Lebrun's studio, and served the talented artist frequently as a model, taking the queen's poses and frequently wearing the state robes.

As her hand caressed the luscious pile of the rich velvet, or her bosom rose and fell under the mock pearls with which Madame Lebrun supplied the place of the royal jewels, her little heart swelled at times with envy of the queen. Why should she, Gay d'Oliva, every whit as

beautiful as the queen, be poor, while her royal twin-sister revelled in luxury? Madame Lebrun told her so much, however, of Marie Antoinette's kindness of heart, that her mental attitude changed somewhat, and she half believed that the life at the Trianon was really the queen's ideal of happiness and not mere acting for effect. But Madame Lebrun told her of other fêtes which were not so simple and inexpensive, where a fortune had been squandered in a day to minister to an idle whim.

Such was the fête at Brunoy given in 1776, and repeated in 1780 by Monsieur the Comte de Provence, brother of the king. The court had quitted Versailles to go to Fontainebleau, and according to usage broke the journey by remaining some days at Choisy. Choisy was near Brunoy, the residence of Monsieur, and as a gallant brother-in-law and munificent prince, he prepared a festival for the queen, which Madame Lebrun assured Gay d'Oliva showed more of *esprit* than any fête which had been given in France. There were parades and comedies, dances and recitations, tableaux, games, a banquet, and a magnificent display of fireworks.

But the part which Madame Lebrun thought was arranged with most taste was the spectacle of the enchanted knights. After the dinner Marie Antoinette and her suite descended to the park. In the first *bosquet* the surprises began. Fifty knights in complete armor were discovered reclining on the grass in picturesque attitudes, their armor suspended from the neighboring trees.

From behind the trees came the sound of music, and a mysterious voice recited their history. They were the companions of Charlemagne, who, since the beauties who had inspired their valorous deeds had disappeared from the earth, had themselves slept an enchanted sleep.

At the approach of the queen, however, these worthies awoke, sprang to their feet, grasped their lances and shields, for the coming of so much beauty had rendered back to them their ancient desire for deeds of prowess.

Every one followed them to the next *bosquet*, an arena richly decorated in the manner of the lists prepared for a tourney in mediæval times. Marie Antoinette was led to a dais, whose steps were occupied by the *élite* of Paris dressed in

the costume of the time of Charlemagne. The trumpets sounded, and fifty pages led in fifty horses, half of the number being jetty black and half pure white with light blue housings, in honor of the queen, whose colors were white and light blue. The knights formed two opposing parties, and went through all the evolutions of a tourney of the time of the Knights of the Table Round, displaying masterly horsemanship, in which again the Comte d'Artois excelled. Of course in the end the knights who rode the white horses won in every encounter, and Madame Lebrun explained how the knights who bestrode the black horses with the scarlet housings wore chain armor, like Saracens, and allowed themselves to be soundly beaten by the queen's champions. Gay d'Oliva's head was quite turned by all this romancing. How fine it would be to take the queen's part just for one day, to stand in a palace garden and hear knights vow allegiance or minstrels sing her praises! But she elevated her saucy nose and asserted that she would rather have seen the tables turned and the black knights treat the queen's party to a sound trouncing. Madame Lebrun was sincere

in her admiration of the queen, and sang her praises continually while she painted until Gay d'Oliva was won over and admired her almost as much as she envied her. Whenever the enthusiastic little artist praised the queen, it seemed to the dull mind of the model that it was for some quality which she possessed in common with her. Had not Madame Lebrun asserted a hundred times that their hair was of the same shade, that their eyes were of the same Austrian turquoise, that Gay's carriage was every bit as aristocratic as that of her Majesty? Why should Marie Antoinette have knights to do combat in her honor, and stroll in those enchanted *bosquets* of Versailles, while she, her twin in every respect but that of birth, earned a scanty livelihood by wearing the royal robes? She had asked the question aloud, and Madame Lebrun had told her it was because the queen was so good that she deserved her happiness; and Gay d'Oliva desired more than she could express to see the queen again and talk with her. Perhaps the queen would take pity on her, and do her some kindness on account of their strange likeness in feature and unlikeness in fortune. Even in her moments

of greatest envy she would not have done the queen an injury, and she grew to almost love her mysterious twin. It was just at this period in Winnie's magical experiences that the Comtesse de La Motte reached the point in her machinations when she could do nothing further with the Cardinal Rohan, without yielding to his demand for a personal interview with the queen. Remembering her glimpse of Gay d'Oliva at Trianon, the countess and her husband had searched all over Paris for the queen's double, but had not found her. At last in an evil hour the conspirators found their tool. In Winnie's dream this second meeting came about in this way.

It seemed to her that she was posing as usual for Madame Lebrun, whose brother had been reading aloud to them that part of the "Travels of Ancharsis" which describes the Greek dinners. Madame Lebrun had invited a little company for that evening to hear a reading of the poet Lebrun, and the description of the various kinds of food used by the Greeks suggested to her ingenious mind the idea of a Greek supper. Throwing down her palette and brushes, she exclaimed: "We will try some of these dishes

to-night." Calling her cook, she explained to her how to make one Greek sauce for the fowl and another for the eels. "And now," she said to Gay d'Oliva, "no more painting this afternoon, but you must help me drape the studio and costume my guests as they arrive in imitation of one of Poussin's paintings."

The Comte de Paris, who had apartments in the same house, was a collector of Etruscan vases, and gladly lent all that madame needed to set her polished mahogany table with the required *pateras*, wine jugs, pitcher for water cooled with snow, beakers, and cups deep or shallow, of classical form, and decorated with Bacchanalian processions.

There were tall standard lamps and incense-burners, and a bronze hanging lamp threw a strong light on the table and the guests who reclined about it. Each of these, as he or she arrived, was appropriately draped by Madame Lebrun and Gay d'Oliva to represent Athenians. When Lebrun arrived, they shook the powder out of his hair and arranged it *à la* Anacreon; a purple mantle was thrown around him, and a laurel wreath placed on his head. The Marquis de Cubières, who came next, entered into

the spirit of the affair, and sent his servant back to his house for a guitar which he had mounted as a golden lyre, and on which he accompanied the others later in the evening while they sang Glück's chorus to the God of Paphos and of Gnidus. Each of the ladies was carefully costumed in draperies of which Madame Lebrun had a quantity in her studio. She was particularly happy in her treatment of her daughter and of Gay d'Oliva, whom she arranged as servitors wearing garlands of roses and bearing tall vases of antique shape. Besides the eels and the fowl, they had salad, a cake of honey, grapes of Corinth, and a bottle of old Cyprian wine, but the entertainment was chiefly an artistic, literary, and musical one.

This simple impromptu affair was greatly exaggerated by report, and it was rumored and currently believed that Madame Lebrun had given a banquet that had cost thousands of dollars.

As Winnie stood in her dream, holding her amphora on her shoulder, she saw enter a sprightly little lady with a foxy face and the shifting glance. It was the Countess La Motte, who had called uninvited, and was making

profuse apologies to the hostess for intruding upon a formal dinner party. To judge from her face, Madame Lebrun seemed to think that the apologies were needed, but she was too courteous not to welcome her unbidden guest, and the countess, seizing an opportunity when they stood a little apart from the others, began volubly to explain the object of her visit. She had heard that the artist was a favorite of Marie Antoinette ; could she not, would she not procure her an audience ? Madame Lebrun's coldly polite manner became icy. She was sorry that it was quite beyond her power to grant the countess this favor.

" If not for me, then possibly for a friend of mine, who is willing to make your fortune, dear madame, if you will grant him this slight favor."

" And this friend is ?" Madame Lebrun's voice trembled with indignation, but she kept it under control. There was suppressed eagerness in the countess' answer :

" His Eminence, Cardinal Rohan."

" Still more impossible. Your request, madame, shows how little you know my principles or those of the queen."

"A fig for those of the queen!" exclaimed the countess in pique; and then as she noticed for the first time the figure of Gay d'Oliva, she turned deadly pale, and caught Madame Lebrun's arm, exclaiming: "I am lost; she has heard me! Why did you not tell me she was here incognito as your guest?"

All her effrontery was gone; she could not muster enough to stammer an apology, until reassured by Madame Lebrun's laughing reply.

"You would have been well punished if it were as you think, but this girl is not her Majesty. She is only a little model of mine who is helping me by serving at my little dinner. Pray be seated; Anacreon is about to give us an ode."

The countess allowed herself to be draped and to recline at one end of the table, but she gave no attention to the poem, and never took her eyes from the handmaiden. Gay d'Oliva in her turn felt herself fascinated by that basilisk stare, and when the countess slipped into her hand her card, on which was written, "Come to my house at ten to-morrow morning," Winnie nodded gravely to the strange, evil-looking little woman, in token that she would comply

with her request. Something told her that she ought not to go. There was a subtle premonition of evil, which should have served as a warning, but Gay disregarded it.

The countess did not entirely disclose her plans. The queen had seen Gay d'Oliva at the fête at Trianon, and wished her to do a service for her.

The girl's eyes sparkled, and the countess saw that she had touched the right motive.

She was to drive with the countess out to the park at Versailles, and there act a part in a sort of tableau or comedy.

Gay was delighted. Was there to be another fête? Were there to be many spectators? Was the part difficult to learn?

The countess answered only the last question. The part was not at all difficult. She was simply to hand a rose and a letter to a noble gentleman, and to say as she gave the rose, "You know what that means."

"What shall I wear?" Gay asked. "My best gown is only a white percale, *moucheté* with little dragon-flies, and trimmed with bows of red ribbon. Court ladies do not dress like that."

FOUNTAINS AT VERSAILLES.

"The court ladies? No; but the Queen does sometimes at Trianon. Has no one told you that you resemble the queen?"

"Yes; Madame Lebrun has said so many times. She says that when I stand so, and look over my shoulder like this, it is her very glance as she looks at the courtiers in waiting in the *Galerie de l'œil-de-bœuf*."

"*À la bonheur*, stand so, and look so at your lover, and you will captivate him, as well as please the queen."

Gay d'Oliva drove out to Versailles with the countess. It was a quiet, moonless night. There was a *bal masque* in the theatre of the château, which had been floored above the seats for the dancing, and was brilliantly lighted. The court were there, and the carriages of those who had come from a distance were in waiting outside the grille. Within the gardens lay shadowy and silent. The fountains had not been turned on, and the marble statues were like the enchanted knights of the Brunoy fête. The countess left her carriage with the others in the outer court and followed a party of guests who were shown toward the theatre to the right of the entrance. She had slipped on

a little black velvet mask, and had thrown a sort of scarf called a Thérèse around Gay's head.

Once inside the palace she turned abruptly down a corridor leading toward the left, and came out upon the *Parterre d'Eau.* "The comedy is not, then, to be acted in the theatre?" Gay asked.

"No; in the garden," whispered the countess, and gripping Gay d'Oliva's hand, she added, "Run quick while that sentinel has his back turned to us."

Wondering why they should make their entrance in this secret way, the girl still obeyed, and they hurried across the *Parterre du Midi* and down Mansart's grand staircase of the Orangery to a shadowy *bosquet* of hornbeam, now called the *Bosquet de la Reine.* "Are we to rehearse the play before the arrival of the company?" Gay asked; "and shall we not need lights?"

"You will need no more light, and there will be no company," the countess replied. "No one told you that it was to be a play. It is a trick which the queen wishes to play on a certain courtier. You look more than ever like

the queen in this uncertain dusk. There, take the pose, throw off the Thérèse. Here are the letter and the rose. Don't forget that you are to say, 'You know what that means,' but say nothing else. Do not contradict him if he takes you for the queen; it is a part of the trick, and it will amuse her Majesty greatly if you carry out your part well.''

"But it is not like the queen's kindness of heart or her dignity to deceive a gentleman in this way," thought Gay.

For the first time a gleam of light shot through her dull intellect. This was no trick of the queen's, but of this strange, malevolent-looking woman, and it could mean no good to the queen. She was so startled by the thought, that she stood stupidly rooted to the ground. The countess had vanished; the hedges were like walls; she could not remember the way she had come; and suddenly there was a step, a stifled voice behind her, and as she turned with just that posture which Madame Lebrun had told her was the queen's very own, there was a gentleman on his knees before her, sobbing, stammering neither he nor she knew what. She let fall the rose which the countess had

placed in her hand, and the cardinal—for she recognized him—had pressed it to his lips. "Oh, fly!" she cried in real distress, as she tried to wrench away her hand. "I am not—" but she had not time to make her avowal, for the countess rushed upon them in real or feigned alarm—"*On vient, vite, vite*—away!"

They regained the countess' carriage and drove to the city. On the way Gay taxed the lady with the conspiracy, which she acknowledged, and attempted to bribe Gay to continue the deception.

"You will come to it," the countess replied triumphantly at Gay's repeated refusals, "for I can give you now more than you have any idea of. You have saved me, you have made all our fortunes. Though you do no more, you have done enough."

It was true. The wicked adventuress stood on the threshold of success. The cardinal had been completely deceived, and was ready to undertake the purchase of the necklace. Villette forged the queen's signature to a contract, in which Rohan purchased the necklace from Boehmer for her, the queen to repay the cardinal in instalments. There remained now only

the trifling difficulty that the cardinal was obstinate about placing the necklace in the queen's own hands, and that Gay could not be induced to again impersonate the queen. The countess promised readily that her Majesty would receive the present without being at all certain of how she would manage this little detail, but hoping to win Gay d'Oliva over.

Although the countess had a handsome house in Paris, she had kept a small apartment in the Place Dauphin at Versailles, and here the cardinal came in February, 1775, accompanied by a servant bearing the precious necklace in its casket. He was trembling with excitement. "Where is the queen?"

"She will come," La Motte promised smoothly; "I have her royal word."

A few moments later, and Villette, disguised as a footman, threw open the door, announcing, "On the part of the queen."

It was Desclos in full royal livery who entered, bearing a note from the queen on a silver salver. The king had demanded the presence of her Majesty at the ball. She was grieved not to keep her appointment with the cardinal, but she sent a receipt for the necklace bearing her

royal autograph. She commissioned Desclos, her private messenger, to receive the necklace, and she would make an early opportunity to thank her friend, the cardinal, in person for his great kindness. The Countess La Motte was white with suspense; the crucial moment had arrived. Would the cardinal fall into the trap? It seemed to her now bungling and improbable; but Rohan, as excited as she, carried away by his hopes and joy, was an easy victim. He placed the casket in the valet's hands unquestioningly, and bowed himself away.

The necklace was divided between the accomplices. It would have seemed that this was the moment for La Motte to fly to foreign lands and enjoy her ill-gotten gains; but no; there was no happiness for her outside of the French court. It was for the privilege of living in this charmed circle that she had intrigued so long and had finally committed this crime. Must she cut herself off from the only reward she desired in order to escape detection? Her husband fled to England, and there disposed of many of the jewels piecemeal; but the countess, rendered reckless by her success, remained, ordered dresses instead of making them, enter-

tained in her handsome house in Paris, and began to figure in society. The Cardinal Prince Rohan was a frequent guest at her dinners, and was sponsor for her respectability. It began to be rumored under the breath of the gossips that the cardinal was no longer out of favor, that he would shortly be presented at court, for the cardinal himself no longer wore the air of hungry anxiety, but a complacent air of triumph. Boehmer, the jeweller, was also happy, for he believed that the queen had purchased the necklace through the cardinal. When the time came for the promised first of the four payments of 400,000 francs, and no word was received from Marie Antoinette, Boehmer allowed himself to send a reminder to the queen, who commissioned Madame Campan to inquire what he meant. Boehmer sent the queen a written statement of the affair, and at the moment when the cardinal was about to celebrate mass he was arrested. Boehmer and the Countess La Motte were also arrested. Then began the weary trial. The scandal was out. Malicious tongues in the court and among the people talked about it on every hand. Marie Antoinette was believed to have coquetted with

the cardinal and to have robbed him, the jeweller, and the public treasury. Libellous pamphlets were published giving scurrilous and lying accounts of the entire affair. It was in vain that the truth was announced; it was not believed. The count and countess and the cardinal were considered martyrs to the queen's malignity, sacrificed in a vain attempt to prove her innocent.

As for Gay d'Oliva, no one believed in her existence. Rumor asserted that it was the queen herself who had given the cardinal repeated rendezvous in the park and elsewhere. It was the queen who had been recognized in the dress of a simple girl slipping into the studio of Madame Lebrun, and remaining there for hours at a time in no one knew what company. It was the queen who had been seen at the hotel of the Countess La Motte, which was also openly frequented by Cardinal Rohan. It was the queen who had been recognized by the gatekeeper at Versailles running with the countess out of the palace at a late hour at night, and driving rapidly away toward Paris, followed closely by the cardinal in his own coach.

Gay heard these stories and tried to contra-

dict them, but was laughed at openly. "That is a pretty romance that you are retailing, but too clever to be of your own invention. How much did the queen pay you to try to deceive us with such an extravaganza?"

She could obtain no credence at the trial, no attention to the statement which she tried to publish.

This wicked plot, in which she had been an almost innocent accomplice, was the queen's ruin. Good people believed her vile and gave her up to her doom, and her enemies gloated over her defamation.

How events thickened after this and clashed against each other, like the mad waves in the rapids approaching a tremendous cataract!

Winnie reviewed mentally all the history of the beginning of the French Revolution, from that visit of the work-people of Paris, who marched out to Versailles in joyous good humor to congratulate the king and queen on the birth of the dauphin in October, 1781, to that other procession of the same women of the Halles, who strode over the same road to bring their sovereigns to their death.

It seemed to Winnie that she, Gay d'Oliva, was in that first company of the different guilds headed by bands of music. The dauphin had been ardently longed for, and all Paris had gone wild with joy. The different trades vied with each other in their display. The chimney-sweeps carried a chimney, perched on the top of which was the smallest and grimiest *ramonneur* in all Paris. The chairmen carried a richly gilded sedan chair, in which a nurse sat dancing a baby supposed to represent the little prince. The cobblers bore a little pair of boots on a cushion. The tailors had made a presentation suit of the uniform of the regiment which he would command. The pastry cooks paraded sugar temples in imitation of the Temple of Love in the Trianon. Every guild had some gift or trophy to offer, some banner with appropriate motto, some orator with a congratulatory speech, some loyal ditty roared in chorus. The artificial-flower makers brought sheafs of royal *fleur-de-lys*. The locksmiths made the king a present of a lock with a secret combination. This was a tactful bit of flattery to his ingenuity, for the king puzzled out the mechanism, and when he touched the proper springs a tiny

statue of the dauphin of exquisite metal-work issued from the key-hole.

The seamstresses had made a *layette* or outfit of clothing for the royal baby, which the embroiderers and lacemakers had decked with the most artistic examples of their skill. The silversmiths presented him with a porringer, the gardeners brought garlands of flowers and panniers of fruit, the street-sweepers vowed that they would sweep all enemies from his path. The fishwomen were most loyal in their protestations. "Sire," said their spokeswoman, "we are sure that our children will be as happy as ourselves, for this child must be like you. You will teach him, sire, to be good and just like yourself. We take upon ourselves the duty of teaching our children how to love and respect their king."

It was Winnie's part in the pageant to present the queen with a pink pearl on the part of the sellers of shellfish—a pearl which they pretended had been found in an oyster on the birthday of the dauphin, and without doubt typified the rosy infant who lay like a jewel on his mother's breast. What universal love and devotion, what a delirium of enthusiastic admira-

tion for the queen! All Paris was illuminated. The Hôtel de Ville was decorated with royal colors, the populace danced in the streets, and before the high altar of Nôtre Dame the monks chanted, "Unto us a child is born!"

But there were presages of ill omen even at this joyful time. The gravediggers had insisted on having a part in the celebration, and, carrying spades and flambeaux, escorted an empty coffin. It was done in merry-hearted thoughtlessness, but Madame Sophie, always timid and apprehensive, had been induced to come to the balcony just as this gloomy *cortége* stopped before it, and the shock was so great that she fell in a fit, from which she never completely recovered. She died a few weeks later, full of gloomy forebodings, predicting the end of the old *régime*.

It came so quickly Winnie had but a confused idea of what happened to Gay d'Oliva or in the political world during the next eight years, but on almost the anniversary of that birthday celebration, on October 6th, she found herself tramping toward Versailles with the same women of the Halles.

How different it all was! There were no joy-

ous cheers of loyalty, but muttered curses and horrible menaces. There was starvation in the gaunt faces of the women and murderous revenge in their bloodshot, half-crazed eyes. They carried no gifts and trophies now, only weapons and missiles. Gay found that one of the fishwomen had placed in her hand not a pink pearl, but a ragged, rusty knife which had been used for opening shellfish.

There was a change in her own feelings, too. She knew that she was hungry, that she belonged to a class oppressed, taxed, made to support an ancient system of aristocracy, and that the hour had struck in which this intolerable injustice to be was to be done away. The women with whom she was marching believed no longer that their king was kind and good or their queen as lovely in character as she was in face. They called them vile, heartless tyrants, who must be exterminated, or tyranny itself could not be crushed. They reached the grille leading from the *Place d'Armes* through a courtyard to the park, and, killing the guards, swarmed through into the gardens. Then the memory of what had happened when Gay was last here swept in upon Winnie's consciousness.

There was the grand terrace with its marble figures representing the rivers of France guarding the sleeping fountains. There was Mansart's superb staircase embracing the Orangery and leading down to the *Bosquet de la Reine*, where Rohan had waited his fancied rendezvous with the queen. As she stood gazing toward this shadowy *bosquet* with a fascinated stare, the hag at her side exclaimed with a curse, "Yes, that is where this wicked Jezebel received her lover, and took from his hand the diamonds that cost France so many millions and were paid for with *our* bread; but to-night the woman who stood there to do that wicked deed shall receive the just retribution for her crime."

"*The woman who stood there to do that wicked deed shall receive the just retribution of her crime.*" The words burned into Winnie's soul as though written with a pen of flame. Suddenly all the heroism of her soul, wakened by remorse, leaped to glorious resolve. That woman who had compassed the queen's downfall would save her now, even though the price were her own life.

"What was done with Jezebel?" the hag shrieked. "When she showed her painted face

at the palace windows they threw her down upon the stones of the courtyard, and the dogs tore her in pieces. Let the queen show herself. The queen! The queen!"

Winnie's new resolve gave her lightning-like directness and speed. She ran to the marble courtyard, where she saw the rioters were forcing an entrance. From this courtyard the marble staircase led to an upper landing, on the left side of which were the king's apartments, on the right the apartments of the queen. The first room in each suite was a hall for the guards, through which one must pass to reach the antechambers.

Up the marble staircase Winnie darted and into the hall of the queen's guards with the very first of the mob. We read* that the guard on duty before the door leading from this hall to the queen's antechamber was struck down, the crowd seizing him and hurling him down the staircase. At the foot, the ragpicker Jourdan ran up, and with an axe still dripping with the blood of another victim, cut off his head. Another guard sprang to his comrade's place.

* Imbert St. Amand's "Marie Antoinette and the End of the Old Régime."

The mob rushed upon him and tore him from before the door, but did not succeed in killing him, for he fought his way through them valiantly, and escaped the hands that strove to throw him down the staircase by darting across the landing into the hall of the king's guards, who closed the door behind him. Meantime, a third guard, not on duty, Monsieur de Sainte Marie, had concealed himself in the embrasure of one of the windows, and might have remained there quite out of danger; but seeing that one sentinel had been killed, that the second, who had tried to take his place, had been torn from his post, and had only saved his life by fleeing, he sprang from his place of concealment, and in the instant that the attention of the rioters was occupied with the other two guards opened the door into the queen's anteroom, and called to two of her ladies who were watching there: "Save the queen; they want to kill her!" So much history tells us; it does not say that Gay d'Oliva played any part at this supreme moment; but when Monsieur de Sainte Marie opened the door, Winnie sprang through it. She had dropped the knife, and as he caught her arm, her face, all an agony of intense

earnestness, gave weight to her words, "I alone can save her; let me in." The guard dropped her arm, closed the door, and bracing his back against it loyally and with perfect calmness faced death. The two ladies-in-waiting ran to the queen and hurried her through a secret passage to the king's bedroom, and Winnie was left alone.

"What shall I do to give her time to escape?" had been her thought, and the answer had already come to her. "I will show myself at the window to the mob howling for her below. They will take me for the queen. The rioters in the next room will break through and throw me out upon stones, like Jezebel, and they will go away satisfied, thinking they have killed the queen." She ran to the *jalousies*, or shutters, but as she fumbled with the brass latch on which Louis XVI. had engraved the monogram of his wife, she remembered that she was in rags, and that her extraordinary resemblance to Marie Antoinette would not be remarked in this garb of poverty. She ran into the queen's dressing-room, tore open the wardrobes, dressed herself in feverish haste in a velvet gown. Quick, a lace fichu, and

there was a coiffure ready curled and powdered and surmounted with an aigrette quivering with diamonds. With trembling fingers she lighted every wax taper in the room, then threw open the shutters and drew herself up to her full height in the old familiar regal pose. The flashing lights reflected and re-reflected from the hundreds of crystal pendants of the *girandoles*, and multiplied by the mirrors which surrounded her on every side, threw her figure into strong relief. She had expected yells of execration from the mob below. Instead utter and ominous silence. She looked down in surprise. Not a torch, not a figure, all of that mass of surging, furious creatures had vanished as by magic. Only the whole terrace silent, shadowy, vacant.

What did it all mean? Had they gone home appeased? Was it only a wild dream? Her heart bounded with sudden hope, then sank with sickening despair as she heard the muffled roar, like that of wild beasts in the arena, on the other side of the palace. They were still yelling for the queen, but now they were under the king's windows. Please Heaven the queen had escaped them by this time and was safely

in hiding in the rooms of some of her loyal servants; but that mob would not go until they were satisfied, and Gay ran down the marble staircase and across the court to where the crowd were standing, crying out: "Do with me what you will; I am the queen."

No one heard her or saw her, for every eye was fixed on the balcony in front of the king's window, and her cry was drowned in a mighty shout, "The queen! the queen!"

For there, proud as a daughter of the Cæsars, pale but heroic, with folded arms, her head held high, and her glance searching the faces before her, and finding there the answer which she expected—Death, stood the real queen. La Fayette stood protectingly at her side, raising his hat in her honor and displaying the tricolor cockade on its side.

Vain attempt to conciliate their fixed determination; the populace yelled, "Let her come with us to Paris—let them all come! To Paris! to Paris!"

The royal coach was brought to the gates. In vain Winnie pressed forward; the crowd would not make way for her. A woman of the Halles alone noticed her, and she only to tear

the diamonds from her hair, exclaiming, "Thief, is this a time to trick yourself out with stolen finery? We want blood, not diamonds."

"I am the queen, I am the queen!" Winnie cried unavailingly. "Take me to Paris; make way that I may reach the carriage."

"Take her to the madhouse," said a man near by, and one of La Fayette's guards, who had come with him from the town of Versailles, on hearing the uproar, and whom the crowd had permitted to enter the palace, issued from the gate and pushed her aside with the flat of his sword, shouting, "Their Majesties drive to Paris!" Jostled rudely from side to side, the breath beaten out of her, with no strength left to utter a word, Winnie saw the carriage containing the woman she had tried to save drive away, with La Fayette riding with drawn sword at its side, striving to protect his sovereigns from insult, though he knew that he could not save them from death. The mob closed in around them and after them, carrying the arms which they had captured from the royal guards; a long line of wagons, which another deputation of the rioters had filled with flour from the

markets of Versailles, led the van, surrounded by women waving branches and shouting, "We are bringing back the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's little boy!"

They were gone in the early morning; the shouts grew fainter, and Winnie stood alone in her velvet dress, torn by rude hands, smirched with the dust of the courtyard, on which she had been thrown and dragged. The palace, with its magnificent galleries, representing the pomp of rule of the last three Louis; the formal gardens, standing for the etiquette of the great court; lovely Trianon, the scene and symbol of the queen's happy, domestic life—all silent and deserted, and equally lost to the innocent victims, so unjustly made to render expiation for the sins of their forefathers.

Hot, scalding tears burst from Winnie's eyes and fell upon the velvet robe, which turned with talismanic touch into her own modern costume. Her hour of dream-life was over. The gardens and the palace were still there, but Gay d'Oliva had changed to Winnie De Witt and the nineteenth century had rolled back to its sovereignty.

Winnie was no more reconciled than before

her phantom life to the fate of the unhappy king and queen. If Louis XIV., who impoverished the nation to satisfy his inordinate vanity, and Louis XV., who wasted its resources still further in vulgar vice, could have ridden with that bodyguard to render an account for their robberies, she would not have questioned the justice of fate; as it was, she could only recognize the inexorableness of that mysterious law that visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation."

CHAPTER XI.

NEAR TO NATURE'S HEART.

EACH of the girls shared Winnie's feeling of revolt and indignation that, among all the friends whom Marie Antoinette had benefited, there was no one to help her in her time of need.

Tib had been reading the recollections of Madame Campan, and was much interested in the part giving an account of the attempt to escape, and the capture at Varennes. Dumas's "Chevalier Maison Rouge" enlarges on legends of attempts at rescue, and she had seen in a book entitled "The Lost Prince," by the Rev. John H. Hanson, a serious consideration of the tradition that the dauphin had been sent to Canada

and given to the Indians. This tradition is not seriously credited in Canada, though many persons are now living who have conversed with its hero, a singular man known as Eleazer Williams, whose age corresponded to that of the dauphin, and who had been brought up by the Indians.

He was not a "conscious" impostor; but if not the dauphin, was self-deceived, for he lived a quiet, self-sacrificing life as a missionary to the Indians, and made no attempt to push any claim to the throne of France.

Tib spoke of this unpretending Pretender one afternoon as they were visiting the market, which now occupies the site of the gloomy prison of the Temple. "Would it not be a comfort to believe," she said, "that the delicate boy, instead of being murdered by slow degrees by that brutal Simon, really escaped to the woods of Canada? If by the magic of the aloe's tear I could step back a century, it is there that I would look for him."

A few days later Tib laid her manuscript under the student-lamp. "I have taken a long journey on Solomon's flying carpet," she said. "I touched my eyelids with the amulet, and

found myself under the pines beside the singing rapids west of Montreal. I knew instinctively that the city across the river was not the Montreal that I once visited in my normal life, but a stockaded town, little more than a fort. I looked at my own clothes, and was not surprised to see that they were those of an Indian girl. My identity came to me all at once. I was the betrothed of Thomas Williams, the grandson of Eunice Williams, who had been captured in her childhood during a raid made by the French and Indians upon the town of Deerfield, in Western Massachusetts. Grandmother Eunice, as we called her, sat beside me quietly fishing with a long line in the rapids. The Indians had built a sort of platform out over the river, and we were accustomed to come to this point to fish. There was a good catch of eels and various kinds of fish in the basket at our side, and I had begun to wind up my line, quite satisfied with my afternoon's sport, but Grandmother Eunice had no notion of stopping. She was an athletic, well-preserved old woman, more Indian-like in her dress and ways than any squaw that I knew.

"She was only eight years old when her cap-

tors brought her to Caughnawaga. She had soon forgotten her parents, and grew up contentedly, marrying an Indian, and never caring to return permanently to civilization, though she went back to Deerfield several times to visit her family, and they used every inducement to persuade her to remain.

"I looked upon Grandmother Eunice with much veneration and greater curiosity, because she had once had the privilege of civilized life, and had given it up for love of a wild one. It was an instance which had been repeated in the next generation, for her daughter Sarah had married an Englishman, a college-bred man and a physician, the son of the Bishop of Chester. He had been on a man-of-war which was captured by the French off Nova Scotia in the war of 1755–60; but his captors had treated him with leniency, and had allowed him to make botanizing expeditions in the woods. At Caughnawaga he had met Sarah, and had fallen in love with her so utterly, that he too had willingly given up all possibility of return to home and friends for her sake, for these were the conditions which Grandmother Eunice demanded. He had never quite become a savage, however,

but devoted his life to the study of botany and of Indian medicaments, and was greatly esteemed by the tribe as a medicine-man. He sent home to his father a book which he had written and illustrated with drawings of plants, which the bishop caused to be published in England, and which would have given the author fame if he had chosen to go back and claim it.

"'There are some flowers,' he used to say, 'marked in the botanies as "escaped from cultivation," which are known as wild flowers to the searchers of the woods, and are as hardy and as happy as any of the natural denizens of the wilderness. Such garden plants, Mother Eunice, are you and I run wild, until it is impossible to transplant us back again to the cloister garden.'

"But just as one generation will long for what the other could not abide, so the son of Sarah and the botanist, my lover Thomas, though brought up among the Indians, loved always to hear his father tell of the cathedral at Chester, and the quaint old town, with its walls and timbered houses, and the bishop's library of many books. His father had no English books, but

he had taught Thomas to read and to write from French ones. But when Grandmother Eunice knew this she took alarm at once. She professed herself afraid that the youth would lose his soul, but she really feared that we would lose him altogether, that the love of a civilized life would grow upon him and that he would leave us. She therefore persuaded his father to allow him to go with the younger Indians on their hunting excursions into the forest during the summer, when the fleets of canoes set out for the upper lakes. Many a son of the French seigniors went with the young Indians on these excursions to hunt the beaver, and became so enamored of the wild life of the woods that they became *coureurs des bois*, as savage as the savages. But Thomas did not care greatly for the amusements of the young braves —marauding expeditions against hostile tribes, drunken orgies, or even games of *la crosse*. It is true that he built himself a hunting lodge at Ticonderoga, where he went every season, but he told me that this was because it was not far from a Dutch trading-post, where he could exchange his beaver skins for various articles of civilized life, and that his hunting lodge was

more like the habitation of a white man than our wigwams at Caughnawaga. He had even been as far as Albany, and had exchanged the booty of an entire season, not for Dutch brandy, but for a Dutch clock, which was a never-ending source of interest to him and a companion to his solitude. He returned to us after the hunting season was over more gentle and studious than ever. He had picked up a little English, and brought some papers and books, which he insisted that his father should teach him to read.

"Our tribe, though a branch of the Iroquois, were allies of the French, and converted, or 'Praying Indians.' They had settled on the rapids near Montreal, in order to be near their white friends, and Thomas went often to the city; consequently Grandmother Eunice was more troubled and perplexed than ever. She went to Father Sebastian for advice, and he at once took Thomas into his especial care and service. Father Sebastian Jourdain was a Jesuit; he preached at our chapel and visited our village often to baptize the infants, confess the older people, hear the children's catechism, marry the young people, and say mass for the

dead. But though there were several hundred of our people, we were not the only souls under his care. He had a long *cote* or strip of land bordering the river in his parish, and was paddled from seigniory to seigniory by his attendant; and it was this service which Thomas now undertook. He carried Father Sebastian's portable chapel for him, when they left the canoe set it up in the castle of some baron or cabin of a simple habitant, and with a coarse linen surplice thrown over his buckskin shirt and leggins assisted Father Sebastian as altar and choir-boy. Father Sebastian told him the names of the lords of these châteaux, and how the lands were parted among the officers of a certain regiment of such high-sounding names as Chamblee, St. Ours, Contrécœur, Vercheres, Varennes, Longueil, Sorel, and others, and how the king had made of some barons and of others knights. And the chivalric stories which he told him of these men interested him so much that Father Sebastian yielded to the youth's pleading and told him tales of France, not alone of the time of Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, but of Louis XIV., the Magnificent, who with Madame Maintenon was so much in-

terested in the founding of Canada and the Christianizing of the Indians.

"'So they thought of us,' Thomas would tell me, 'over there in their beautiful palace of Versailles, which Father Sebastian says surpasses in beauty all we are able to think. They thought of us, and the king sent pious priests to tell us of Jesus. How I wish we could do something for him or for his descendants to show our gratitude! But of course they have everything now.'

"Father Sebastian not only entertained and amused Thomas with stories, he also instructed him, and Thomas became passionately devoted to his patron, for whom he would have lain down his life had it been required. In proportion as Thomas's love for the priest increased, I grew jealous of him, for his absences from me grew longer; and when Father Sebastian, after his custom, went into retreat at the seminary at Montreal, Thomas went with him and studied at the priests' school.

"It was because we were betrothed and that I was lonely in his absence that I loved to come to Grandmother Eunice's fishing platform and talk with her.

"'Tell me,' I begged, 'all you remember of your coming to live among us.' I had heard the story often before, but it was one which I never tired of hearing or she of telling.

"'It was a sorry morning in February,' was the way in which she always began the recital, 'in the gray of the early twilight, at the hour when cold is strongest and sleep soundest, being the hour and season wherein the old do commonly die. I was awakened from my sleep by sounds of horror, and knew that our town of Deerfield was under a surprise of the French and Indians. I fled out into the snow, where I was presently overtaken and led into the church, with upward of an hundred of my townspeople; and when a dividence of the captives was made, I found myself fallen to the share of an Indian, who was very kind to me; for though the greater part of the prisoners were made to walk and to carry packs, he took me upon his shoulders.

"'When we were come to the Connecticut River the Indians made toboggans, and on one of these I rode. My mother was killed upon the journey, but I knew it not, nor did I see my father nor my brothers and sisters, for we

belonged to separate masters. When we reached the mouth of the White River, the Sieur Hertel de Rouville, who commanded the expedition, ordered that the French soldiers should separate themselves from the Indians. The Indians, therefore, took the captives along Lake Champlain to Chamblee, in Canada, where was a French fort, while the army continued up the Connecticut. When our doleful procession crept into the fort of Chamblee there was great confluence of the kind-hearted settlers to ransom us from the Indians, and many were so rescued ; but my master would not sell me, and there setting in a thaw, we paddled down the Richelieu, passing seigniories of great lands, with here and there a house, or rather castle, of hewn stone and squared timber. And so we came at last to Caughnawaga ; and here the welcome I received was daughterly, and the Indian children were kind to me, and taught me their games, and I grew up with them ; and now and then came the old priest Father Étienne and taught me my catechism, and sometimes the older Indians would take me in their canoes or bring me honey or sugar of maple and beads from Montreal, and gayly painted quills, with which the

squaws taught me to embroider, or told me stories of talking animals ; and sweet and happy were my days in the whispering forest and beside the singing river ; so that though my white friends made great pother for me, and though all the rest of my family were ransomed and returned to New England, and I also had leave to go, and great and notable embassies passed between our two nations in regard to me, so that even the Indians were afraid to detain me, and Father Étienne himself was fain to let me go, yet would I not, for I had found true happiness in the life of innocence, which is near to nature's heart.'

" ' If this is the happiest life,' I said, ' why is it that Thomas loves to go to Montreal and to talk with French priests ?'

" Grandmother Eunice sighed, and dropping her lines, laid her hand on my arm.

" ' I love you, Marie,' she said, ' and I used foolishly to think that you might help us keep our boy in the Indian life, which is a life of innocence. I used to tremble and fear when I saw him reaching out for books, for I feared he would escape from us to the homes of the whites, who lead a life of devils. Do we not

know that this is so from their revels in the woods, where they corrupt the Indians by selling them brandy and incite them to murder and other deadly sins?'

"'But Thomas's father is a white man,' I replied, 'and so was yours. And they surely did not lead the life of devils?'

"'Thomas's father abjured that life for ours,' Grandmother Eunice replied; 'and of my own father, the so-called Rev. John Williams'—here she crossed herself—'I only know what I have been told by reverend priests, that he was a pestilent heretic, to whom great privileges of joining the true church were offered during his captivity, but who obstinately refused them all. It would have been a killing grief to me if Thomas had run away to New England, as I once feared he might, to seek our relatives there; for though they would doubtless have received him with joy and triumph, and have offered him a home such as they pressed upon me when I went back to visit them, yet it would have been a lure of Satan.'

"'Thomas will never go back,' I said proudly. 'You need not fear that, Grandmother Eunice, for he has promised to marry me next St. Mar-

tin's Day and take me to his lodge at Ticonderoga, and I will keep him true to Indian ways and to the life of innocence.'

"But Grandmother Eunice shook her head. 'There is a higher life than that of innocence and nature,' she said, 'and it is this life of obedience which has been calling Thomas all this time, and I have misunderstood the call, and have been troubled when I should have rejoiced. The life of obedience is often hard to the flesh, but it is the safest; for, as Father Sebastian has often explained to you, "In commanding it is possible to err, in obedience it is impossible;" for if we do wrong the fault is our superior's and not ours. My father and Thomas's grandfather, the Bishop of Chester, were both preachers in their mistaken, wilful ways, and did much to spread abroad errors. We should be glad if Thomas has inherited their talents, but not their delusions, and is called to preach the true faith.'

"'When did you learn that Thomas had decided to be a priest?' I asked angrily, for when he was last at Caughnawaga Thomas had not told me that he had so decided, but only that Father Sebastian wished him to become one.

"'Father Sebastian told me,' Grandmother Eunice replied. 'When he comes again he will tell you himself; but it is always well to be prepared. If you love Thomas, you should be as proud and glad as I am; besides there are plenty of young men who would be glad to marry you. Thomas cannot care much for you if he wishes to be a priest. Show him when he comes that you can easily console yourself. There is Antoine Deerfoot, the best *la crosse* player in the tribe. He is pining for you. I should think you would be proud of such a lover. Thomas is a squaw-man, he cannot run or play *la crosse*. There is to be a game this afternoon. If you go it will put new vigor into Antoine's legs. He will run as he never ran before.'

"I did not go to the game that afternoon, but Grandmother Eunice's words made a deep impression upon me, and I determined that I would not allow Thomas to be stolen from me in this way. I was so angry with Grandmother Eunice that I did not offer to carry her basket of fish, but ran ahead of her to the village and sulked by myself. The next day I wandered idly out to the river again. As I sat watching the water-

fowl that flew above the river I noticed a canoe pushing toward our village. Even before I could recognize its occupants I could tell by its straight course that it was propelled by a skilful paddler, and one who was familiar with the rapids and the landmarks on our bank. Presently I noticed that the seated figure in the stern was dressed in black, and then I knew that he must be Father Sebastian, and that Thomas was coming home. I ran swiftly down to the landing-place, but there were others there before me, and among them Dr. Williams, Thomas's father. He did not look at his son at first, but placed his hand on the priest's arm. 'You have come in good time,' he said. 'I have spent the night at the bedside of my wife's mother. She is dying, and has called for you and for Thomas. Come.' We followed the doctor down the trail to Grandmother Eunice's cabin, which was a little better and a little apart from the other wigwams. My heart smote me when I saw the heavy basket of fish at the door. I followed the others into the room and knelt beside the bed. Thomas set up the portable altar and lighted its two tapers. The priest bent over Grandmother Eunice and

tried to receive her dying confession, but she could not utter a word, and he gave her absolution without it. Her restless gaze wandered constantly from Thomas to the priest.

"'She wishes to give you her blessing,' Father Sebastian said, and Thomas knelt beside me, and the priest placed her hand on his head. Then with a spasmodic movement she drew her hand away, and in so doing it rested for an instant on my head also, and at the same instant with a fluttering sigh she was gone.

"Thomas's eyes were filled with tears. 'I wish she could have spoken to me,' he said. 'I wonder what she would have said!'

"'Just what she was repeating all night in her delirium,' his father replied. '"Tell Thomas to obey Father Sebastian. The life of obedience is the happiest life."'

"'I will always obey you,' said Thomas solemnly; 'but I think, reverend father, that she wished to say more than that. She knew that I loved Marie here; her hand passed from my head to Marie's. I believe that she wished you to marry us.'

"'I will marry you,' said Father Sebastian. 'Take each other by the right hand.'

"'But if Thomas marries me,' I said, 'he cannot live the life of obedience, he cannot be a priest.'

"'There are other ways in which to lead that life,' said Father Sebastian. 'Thomas has just sworn to obey me. When I need some one for any service requiring particular devotion I will call upon him, but I am convinced that his vocation is not that of a priest.'

"So by the side of that dead woman we were married, and our bridal joy was shadowed by our mourning for her, and by the vague fear and wonder whether, after all, if she could have spoken she would not have forbidden the marriage when Father Sebastian called upon any who knew of any just impediment to speak.

"After our marriage we went away to Thomas's lodge at Ticonderoga, and I was surprised to find what a comfortable home he had provided for me. It was a log-house, unlike most of the cabins, two stories in height, and the upper story was higher and better finished than the lower. This upper story he had set apart for Father Sebastian, and the priest had made him a visit here the previous summer, and had partially furnished it. There was a French fort

not far away on the lake, easily reached by an hour's paddling, but Father Sebastian cautioned Thomas not to tell any of the soldiers the situation of his lodge. This was for my sake, as it was safer for me that these lawless men should not know that there was a young Indian girl near them. But Father Sebastian had visited the fort, and was the friend of the commander, young Réné de Longueil, the son of the baron of whose château, south of Montreal, flanked with four great round towers of hewn stone, and built by his ancestor, Charles Le Moyne, Frontenac wrote: '*Son fort et sa maison nous donnent une idée des châteaux de France fortifies.*'

"Thomas frequently went to the fort and acted as guide to the officers on their hunting excursions. There was a half-breed Indian trader, Peter Vanderhuyden, who sometimes came to our lodge, and was our only visitor except Father Sebastian. Peter smuggled us Dutch goods from Albany, so that though apparently in the very centre of the forest primeval we were in connection with both the Dutch and French cities.

"Every summer we went to our lodge and

stayed until the hunting season was over, when we returned to Caughnawaga. Each season Father Sebastian visited us and brought something for his apartment, until it became more comfortable and even more luxurious than the seminary at Montreal. He extended his missionary labors, and Thomas paddled him up the great lakes, where he had regular stopping-places at the block-houses of the *coureurs des bois*. These wild men did not ordinarily welcome the fathers, but they had some mutual understanding with Father Sebastian, and were eager for his coming, and held long parleys with him. Thomas thought that these were rather political than religious, for he brought them their mail, letters and papers from France, and many of the wildest of these young men were the sons of nobles who had settled along the Richelieu, and had taken to the woods and to trading brandy for beaver-skins with the Indians because there was no other career open to them, and their fathers could obtain only such paltry rents for their lands from the habitants, that they could not maintain them. But though they were so enamored of their wild life that no amount of privation would induce them to re-

turn to France, which was now distracted with revolution, they were very loyal subjects of the king, and eager to hear the latest news from Paris.

"So the years went by, and we had sons born to us, and our life was always the same, but never monotonous; and at length we began to be conscious that afar off events of importance were transpiring which might affect even us.

"Thomas said that when he took the father up the Richelieu to the châteaux of the seigniors, where formerly there had been little interest in his coming, and his sermons had been listened to only by women and children, now there was always a gathering of the masters, and especially of the officers of the regiments.

"Father Sebastian went down to Quebec to attend a council at the bishop's, and when he returned there was another council at the governor's house in Montreal, to which he went, though he sat only in the antechamber. Later Thomas heard him tell the father superior at the seminary that he mistrusted the intendant, and thought he ought not to have been taken into the plot, as the intendants were *gens de robe*, or lawyers, and that class had always been

the servants and spies of the prevailing government, with no true loyalty to the king at their heart, and naturally, for they did not belong to the old *noblesse.* So we came to know that there was a plot of some kind on foot.*

"This might be true of the outward seeming and of the majority of the settlers, but there were hearts in Canada which beat with the same passionate throbs, and brains which schemed at the same problems, and swords that were ready to be drawn for the same cause as those in France.

"Thomas kept his ears open and his eyes about him as he took the father from place to place, and at length he learned much and suspected more, and told me one night that the king was in deadly peril, and that a small ship had been fitted out by his friends in Canada, and had sailed for France to rescue the royal family

* Parkman says of this period: "When France was heaving with the throes of the revolution; when new hopes, new dreams, new thoughts—good and evil, false and true—tossed the troubled waters of French society, Canada caught not the faintest impulsion of its roused mental life. The torrent surged on its way, while in the deep nook beside it the sticks and dry leaves floated their usual round, and the unruffled pool slept in the placidity of intellectual torpor."

and to bring them to Canada ; but this secretly, as the government of Canada must outwardly act in accordance with the government at home.

" When we set out for Ticonderoga that season the father sent with us two canoes, manned by Indians of our village, and laden with supplies which we were to bestow in his apartment in our lodge. ' And it may be,' said the father, ' that I shall bring you guests before the season is over.' And he looked earnestly at Thomas ; and seeing in him some sign of intelligence, though he answered never a word, Father Sebastian added : ' And you will know how, my Thomas, both you and your good wife, Marie, to receive these guests according to their rank, and to keep them hidden from their enemies ; for this is perchance the service to which you have vowed obedience—a service as sacred as the priesthood.'

" When Thomas told me this I was filled with exceeding awe and joy. ' But how can we content the king and queen here ? ' I asked my husband ; and he told me that the father had told him that, even when they were living in the beautiful palace of Versailles, the king loved best to hunt in the forest, and the queen

to flee away from the court and live in a thatched hut as rude as our lodge, and that she had often said that it would have pleased her to have brought up her children near to nature's heart, in a life of innocence like our own.

"So all that summer I prepared for our guests and garnished their apartment, and one day, near the close of the season, Father Sebastian came, but he came alone. There were tears in his eyes, and we asked him nothing until he had set up his altar in the upper chamber and had said mass before it. Then, as we sat about our fireside after supper, he spoke plainly and told us all. How the ship had sailed to France, and had even gone up the Seine, and had delivered its cargo of peltries, but it had arrived too late, for the king was dead, killed by his wicked enemies, and the good queen and her children were close prisoners in the tower of the Temple; and so the ship had returned effecting nothing.

"'But,' said Father Sebastian, 'there must have been a traitor's heart or tongue somewhere, or they would have effected the escape of the queen and her family.' And then he bent his face upon his hands and wept, and

smitten by the same grief which wrung that loyal heart, I wept with him, and my tears, as ever in our dream experiences, broke the spell. As they fell the scene changed. The forest primeval faded away, and I was no longer the Indian girl Marie in the Canadian wilderness, but, without at first realizing any connection between this dream and my late one, I now fancied that I was Marthe de Jourdain, once a maid of honor to Marie Antoinette, now an *emigré* in the little town of Coblenz, the headquarters of the Royalist party.

"How eagerly I listened to every scrap of news from Paris! How my heart sank as the situation grew more and more desperate! The royal family had been carried from Versailles to Paris by the mob before I had left France. The king had been urged to fly, but had insisted on remaining and on trusting himself to the loyalty of his subjects, until it was too late to escape. He had, however, favored the flight of his aunts, Mesdames Adelaide and Victoire, and that of his younger brother, the Comte d'Artois, and of the Prince de Condé.

"His brother next him in age, the Comte de Provence, remained in Paris as long as he could

safely do so. He pretended to liberal, almost republican opinions, and truckled to the convention and to the people. He saw the coming of the revolution with satisfaction, for he had no real love for his brother, and was willing that he should be dethroned, feeling sure that the fickle French pendulum would soon swing back again to monarchy, and he schemed most adroitly to keep on good terms at once with the people and with the nobility. It was a delicate *rôle*, but he was sufficiently astute for the part he had determined to play. He did not, like the Duc d'Orleans, avowedly rank himself with the enemies of his brother. This would have been to ruin his own cause with the Royalist party ; but even to the Royalists he made no secret of his opinion that his brother was a fool, and that his misfortunes were due to his own mismanagement. Louis XVI. distrusted him, and the result showed that he had reason to do so. As soon as the Comte de Provence saw that he could not control the revolutionary movement, and that he was himself in danger, he joined the exiles at Coblenz, and placed himself at their head, establishing a court there, announcing himself as the representative of his

brother, who, as a virtual prisoner, he claimed, could not be regarded as the King of France. This action grieved Louis XVI., as it tended to weaken his authority, and to lead the Royalist party to look to his brother rather than to him for their orders. Already the miserable little band of *emigrés* were divided into two parties, those who believed in the Comte de Provence and those who did not; but even among those who trusted him the majority still gave the allegiance of their hearts to their imprisoned king, and hoped for his restoration. We had our spies in Paris, and received almost daily bulletins as to the events which transpired and the condition of the king and queen. We knew that they were imprisoned in the Temple, and though it was considered one of the strongest prisons since the fall of the Bastile, there were still adventurous spirits who hoped for their rescue, and there were schemes for undermining the walls, and signals attempted from windows commanding the platform on which the royal family were allowed to walk. Letters were written them in cipher and in sympathetic inks, few of which reached their destination; money was lavishly poured out in bribes, and some

devoted spirits rashly returned to Paris, at the peril of their lives, to attempt their rescue. Of the sympathetic plots in Canada, of which I had known in my first dream experience, I was aware now from letters from my brother, the Jesuit Father Sebastian. If he knew of these plots, the king was not deluded. After the attempted escape and capture at Varennes Louis XVI. knew that his doom was sealed, and prepared himself for death. He hoped that his queen and his family might be spared, and even in the gloomy prison of the Temple devoted himself to the education of the dauphin, spending three hours each day in hearing his lessons in arithmetic, geography, and history. The arithmetic was suppressed by the guards, under the pretence that the king was teaching the prince to communicate with his friends by writing in cipher. The king took an especial interest in teaching him French history, and sometimes spoke to him of the possibility of his reigning.

"The dauphin was very affectionate and gentle, passionately attached to his parents, and of precocious sensibility and intelligence. Before his imprisonment he had a garden of his own

at Versailles, where it was his greatest pleasure to make bouquets for 'Mamma Reine.' This custom he had continued at the Tuilleries, and on finding some sparse grass and wild flowers growing in one of the bastions of the tower, he even made her a bouquet in the Temple. He had had a little pet dog named Moufflet, and on one rare occasion he had been naughty, and, sure that this was the best way to touch his heart, Moufflet was shut up in a closet as an accomplice. Immediately the little prince ran to his mother and begged that he might be allowed to take Moufflet's place. 'For, indeed,' he said, 'it is I and not Moufflet that have been naughty.' I remembered this occurrence, and related it one day in the presence of the Comte de Provence; but his only reply was that his nephew had now all the imprisonment he could possibly desire.

"There was an artist named Bellanger, who was employed by the Comte de Provence, who was a very gallant gentleman, and passionately devoted to the king. He came sometimes to visit my mother and myself, and we talked together of the desperate situation in which Louis XVI. was now placed. I remember his passion-

ate despair when the news came of the trial and condemnation of the king, and his frenzy at the still more heart-rending tidings of his death. It was at this time that a letter came to me from my brother Sebastian, telling me of his frustrated hopes of having the royal family secretly conveyed to Canada.

"'My God!' exclaimed Bellanger, 'if I had known of this in time I would have managed their escape. It is not too late now to work for the queen and for the rest. From this moment I devote myself to their rescue.'

"The Comte de Provence had affected great grief on the news of the execution of the king, and had issued a proclamation, of which the following extract is a part:

"'*Louis Stanislaus Xavier de France, Uncle of the King, Regent of the Kingdom, to all those to whom these letters shall come, greeting:*

"'Penetrated with horror on learning that our dear and most honored brother and sovereign lord, the king, Louis XVI., has died under the parricidal steel which the ferocious usurpers of the sovereign authority in France have

THE DAUPHIN, LOUIS XVII.

brought upon his august person, we declare that the dauphin, Louis Charles, born March 27th, 1785, is King of France and Navarre, under the name of Louis XVII., and that by the right of birth, as well as by the disposition of the fundamental laws of the kingdom, we are and will be Regent of France during the minority of the king, our nephew and lord.

"'Invested in this quality, we do pledge ourselves—

"'First, to the liberation of the king, Louis XVII., our nephew.

"'Second, of the queen, his august mother; of the princess, his sister, our very dear niece; of the Princess Elizabeth, his aunt, our very dear sister—all detained in the severest captivity, etc.

"'To which end we command all French and subjects of the king to obey the commandments which they shall receive from us.

(Signed) "'LOUIS STANISLAUS XAVIER.'

"From this proclamation it would have seemed that the escape of the royal family was the dearest object of the heart of the Comte de Provence; but when Bellanger explained his

plans to him, and asked his co-operation, he did not immediately give it, but counselled him to caution, and forbade his saying anything to any person whomsoever relative to the scheme until he should give him leave. At the same time he assured Bellanger that he approved of the plan, and would assist him in it as soon as the time was ripe. With this promise that our efforts would one day be called for, Bellanger and I set to work and matured our plans. We invented a system of writing in cipher by which we could communicate with each other. My brother and I had been in the habit of adding to our letters anything of a private nature by writing it in milk between the lines. This writing was not visible until the letter had been toasted over the fire, when the characters came out in brown. We had begun this when my brother was in his novitiate and I at the boarding-school of St. Cyr, when our letters were inspected by our superiors. Since that time we had never failed to hold the letters which we received from each other over the fire, to ascertain whether there was any message other than appeared. I therefore wrote him after this fashion, asking whether it would be possible

for the ship which had been sent out for the king's rescue to come again, and for information as to when and where we might expect her. We could do little else except to make plans, for the injunction of the Comte de Provence kept us from carrying them out; but our mutual secret drew us closely together, and naturally our fellow-exiles fancied that Bellanger was paying his court to me. His friends one day congratulated him and asked when the betrothal was to be announced, and this put an idea into his mind which otherwise might not have occurred to him, as he was so deeply absorbed in the one great object to which he had devoted himself that it left no room in his heart for any other passion. But he saw at once that if we were married we could work together to far better advantage, and this was the way in which he proposed to me. I was piqued that he should care for our marriage only as a mask for our plotting, and told him that if this was his only motive he need not feel it his duty to so sacrifice himself.

"'Nay, Marthe,' he replied, ''twere no sacrifice to me, but an honor to which I could not hope to aspire, were it not that I believe you

capable of marrying even so insignificant a person as myself for the sake of your loyalty to the royal family.'

"With that I told him that he was greatly mistaken, for I would marry for no such reason, but for love only. With that he took up his hat silently and was about to leave, when a sudden glimmering of the truth seemed to strike him, and running to me, he caught me in his arms, crying, 'Then love me a little, Marthe; love me a very little.'

"'Nay, but with my whole heart,' I replied; and my mother coming in, gave us her blessing, and shortly after we were married, the Comte de Provence giving me a portion at my wedding. But in our new joys and interests we did not forget the great object which had united us.

"From Royalist spies in Paris we learned the disposition of the rooms in the Temple in which the royal family were imprisoned. The building consisted of a great tower, flanked by turrets at each of the corners. It had been built by the Knights Templars as a treasury; its walls were nine feet in thickness. The ground floor was devoted to the officers on service in the Temple. The next, a first story, as it is called

in France, was a guard-room for the sentries. The second story consisted of four rooms, and had been occupied by the king, the dauphin, and their attendants; the third story by the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the sister of the king, and the Princess Royal. A spiral staircase in one of the turrets at a corner of the tower communicated with each story, so that one could reach any floor without passing through the others. At first the royal family were allowed to be together during the day, and to walk on the platform on the roof of the tower, and occasionally in an enclosed garden at its foot; but their treatment became more and more rigorous as the days of terror approached. It was on January 21st, 1792, that the king was beheaded. In the spring we heard that the dauphin's health was suffering, in June that he had been separated from his mother, though still in the Temple, and had been given to the brutal guardianship of the shoemaker Simon.

"Every insult and every cruelty which this wretch could devise was visited on the delicate child. He was beaten, kicked, taunted, cursed, starved, made to perform the most

menial services, to drink brandy, and tortured in body and mind; but though usually obedient, nothing could induce him to sing the republican songs in which his parents were insulted. Simon's pet epithet was 'Damned wolf's cub!' but he called him by many other names too vile and profane to repeat. When the prince had been given into his care he had asked what was expected of him, and was instructed not to kill the child outright, but to murder him by degrees, to gradually quench his intellect and undermine his constitution, so that his imbecility, depravity, or death should have the appearance of having taken place from natural causes.

"Simon set himself to his task with demoniac skill. It was as though Satan himself had assumed human form to ruin the boy—body, mind, and soul. While the prince was in this triple peril the trial of the queen began, and we saw that whatever was to be done for their rescue must be done quickly; and Bellanger again approached the Comte de Provence, but was again put off. On October 16th, 1793, the queen died under the guillotine with dignity and courage. Madame Elizabeth and many of

France's noblest followed. All Europe shuddered, and public opinion even in France underwent a change. It was felt that matters had gone too far. La Vendée rose and pronounced Louis XVII. king, with no reference to any regency, demanding his release. Robespierre, perhaps with some vague premonition that his time for doing mischief was short, and dissatisfied with the slow torture of Simon, dismissed him and ordered the dauphin to solitary confinement. For more than six months he remained in a cell. 'His food was handed him through a revolving aperture, which did not permit his seeing the person who delivered it. During the whole of that period the door of his apartment was never opened. No gleam of sunlight, no breath of fresh air came to the little victim.' In loneliness and darkness and filth, the passionate grief, fear, and agony gradually died into hopeless apathy, resembling idiocy.

"At length Robespierre fell, the moderate party triumphed, and endeavored to atone for the past. Prison doors were thrown open and prosecutions ceased. Barras, commandant of the National Guard, appointed a humane man

named Laurent keeper of the Temple. He was horror-stricken when he saw the terrible condition of filth and misery in which the poor child was lying. A few days more and he would certainly have died; but Laurent carried him from his loathsome cell, washed him tenderly, laid him upon sweet, clean linen in an airy room, gave him nourishing food and kind treatment. As he found that he could not restore the child to health by these measures, he demanded a physician, and on May 6th, 1795, Dr. Dessault, one of the most eminent doctors of Paris, was appointed to attend him.

"The Comte de Provence had a friend and ally in Paris, the Marquis de Fenouil, who passed for a Republican, and had some influence with the government. It was he who sent the Comte de Provence bulletins of the progress of affairs. He wrote him that he had seen Dr. Dessault, and that he was very hopeful as to the recovery of the dauphin, and intended to petition that he should be allowed to take him to the country for change of air and exercise. At the same time the Vendean party were using all their influence to have the prince surrendered to their chiefs. If, said the marquis, Dr. Dessault,

who was truly devoted to saving the life of the prince, could only be induced to report his condition as worse than it really was, the convention might be persuaded to conciliate the chiefs by giving him up, as it would be more to their credit that he should die in their care than in that of the republic.

"'In any case,' the Marquis de Fenouil wrote, 'the cause of the dauphin was never so hopeful as now. Even if not sent into Vendée, in which case he will be immediately declared king, and rally all the Royalist party to his support, under Dr. Dessault's treatment, he will undoubtedly recover. Opinion is changing even in Paris; there will undoubtedly soon be a restoration, and your highness will be established at Versailles as regent.'

"Bellanger was with the Comte de Provence when this message arrived. He was strongly excited. 'Now is the time for your scheme, my good Bellanger!' he exclaimed. 'Explain your plan in detail to me. I am ready to give you every assistance.'

"Bellanger was a little surprised that, while the fate of the dauphin was so desperate the comte should have been so indifferent to his

rescue, and as soon as there seemed to be a prospect of his release, should desire that he should be transported to Canada ; and he took the liberty to represent to the comte that if the report of the Marquis de Fenouil was true, it might be interfering with the interests of Louis XVII. to attempt his rescue at this time. But the Comte de Provence explained to Bellanger that the Marquis de Fenouil was an enthusiast, who allowed his desires to bias his judgment ; that there was no probability whatever that the republic would willingly surrender the dauphin to his friends, when their interests demanded his death ; moreover, that the opinion of Dr. Dessault that his recovery was probable would very likely cause his assassination, and that instant advantage should be taken of any temporary leniency to secure the escape of the dauphin. Bellanger's loyalty was so deep that he easily believed in that of the regent, and convinced by his plausible arguments, we at once set ourselves to carrying out our long-cherished plans. Unfortunately no ship was to be expected from Canada. That attempt having once proved abortive, would not be made again ; but my brother wrote that he had

trusty friends who would receive the dauphin in a safe place of hiding in the wilderness. He counselled our taking as few persons as possible into our confidence, as he feared that the first plan had miscarried through some traitor. The Comte de Provence also forbade us to communicate our designs to any persons not expressly approved of by the Marquis de Fenouil. The comte gave Bellanger a letter to the marquis and provided him liberally with money. He was to proceed to Paris and mature his plans for the abduction of the dauphin, while I was to wait at Brussels, ready to follow him when I was needed. We had found out the times of sailing for America of several ships from different ports, and had determined to take the one leaving next after the accomplishment of our purpose.

"As soon as Bellanger arrived in Paris he reported to the Marquis de Fenouil, and was told that a circumstance had occurred very favorable to our plans. Laurent, the keeper of the Temple, had asked for an assistant, and the marquis had managed so adroitly that a man entirely devoted to the interests of the Comte de Provence, Gomin by name, had been appointed to

this post. The marquis had another accomplice, named Debierne, whom he sent to Gomin, under the pretence of carrying playthings to the prince, but who informed Gomin of a design of carrying the young king into La Vendée. Gomin entered into this scheme with delight, and promised his aid.

"Debierne went to Gomin again, taking him a carrier pigeon, by which he could send the marquis a letter in case he needed to communicate with him, as he was not allowed to leave the Temple, except at rare intervals, and had no means of communicating with his friends. Laurent, though uniformly humane, was a Republican, incorruptibly honest, and so devoted to his duty that no assistance could be counted on from him. It was therefore an unexpected piece of good fortune that he wearied of his post, desired to return to his family, and petitioned to be discharged. The marquis was unable to secure the appointment of a Royalist in his place; but Étienne Lasne, a soldier of the National Guard, who received the position, was a man of convenient principles, yielding to the bribes, which (owing to the generosity of the Comte de Provence) it was possible to offer. The

discipline of the Temple immediately relaxed. 'Hitherto the keys could only be used in the presence of both the keepers; they were now placed at the disposal of either of them.' Gomin oiled all the locks and hinges, so that they moved noiselessly, and was accustomed to play upon the violin, so that any unusual noise, as of persons ascending or descending the stairs, would not be likely to be heard by the sentries in the guard-room. Bellanger held several conferences with Lasne, and it was decided that the only way to abduct the prince and protect his keepers would be to substitute in the place of the dauphin another child as nearly resembling him as possible. 'Only,' said Lasne, 'let the child left here in the dauphin's stead be one so ill that he will die in a few days. Then his death can be attested, and he can be safely buried before any one who knows the prince can detect the exchange.'

"Gomin suggested that the body of a dead child be obtained from some hospital, and the death of Louis XVII. announced as soon as he was given to Bellanger. But Bellanger himself objected to this, as the announcement of the dauphin's death might institute examination,

and he wished time to get out of France. Lasne's plan was accordingly agreed upon. He assured Bellanger that it was to the interest of the Republicans that the dauphin should either die or be supposed to be dead, as this would remove the great rallying object of the Royalist party. Lasne saw through the motives of the Comte de Provence, but as he was not nearly so formidable an antagonist as Louis XVII., he was willing to act with him so far as getting rid of the prince was concerned. Bellanger was an enthusiast, and believed that when the time was ripe for the restoration the comte would produce the young king ; but Lasne knew that it would not be easy to prove his identity after the attestations of death and burial. So from very different motives all worked together.

"It was decided that a child taken from a Parisian hospital would be too easily traced, and the task of procuring a substitute was assigned to me. I had a description of the physical condition of Louis XVII. He had knotty swellings at the joints of the knees, wrists, and elbows. These swellings were distinctly described by Dr. Dessault as not scrofulous, but the result of lack of exercise. He prescribed

simple friction for them, and urged change of air. His most serious symptoms were connected with his mental state. He was mute, almost imbecile, and though he played mechanically at building card houses, he took no interest in anything else.

"I went to several children's hospitals, representing myself as a lady of means who wished to adopt a child, and at length I was fortunate enough to find a child dying of scrofula, who in many respects resembled the prince. This child was older and taller than Louis XVII., but he was too ill to talk; his face was so swollen and disfigured by disease that it was hardly possible to tell how it might have looked when in health, so that I hoped that if he were seen in prison by any of his old acquaintances the fraud might not be detected. The authorities at the hospital were surprised that I wished to adopt so helpless a child, but as I assured them that he resembled a child whom I had lost, and as the boy was a waif—a foundling—in whom no one was interested, they were very willing to give him up rather than have him die on their hands.

"Poor child! my heart warmed with pity to

him in the few days that he was in my care, and if there had been any possibility of his recovery, I would never have placed him in prison.

"I set out for Paris in the diligence which would reach the barrier at night, that I might undergo a less rigorous scrutiny from the custom officers. There were a few other passengers, but no one paid any attention to me or to the child until we reached the frontier, when a young Frenchman entered and took the seat beside me. The sick boy, wearied with his journey, wailed, and the young man arranged his cloak upon his lap so that the poor little fellow could rest more comfortably. The stranger looked pityingly at the poor, swollen face, and asked why I was travelling with so sick a child.

"'It is to seek medical care in Paris,' I replied.

"The young man shook his head dubiously. 'I fear, my good woman, that the physicians can do little for your son, except to allay his sufferings. Still, if you will take him to Dr. Dessault, the most able physician in Paris, he may be able to cure him. They say he has

done wonders with the little prisoner in the Temple, who is likely to prove a bone of contention for years to come, instead of good-naturedly dying, as we all hoped.'

"'I shall try to obtain Dr. Dessault's services,' I replied.

"'Do so; he is a friend of mine, and I will speak to him of your boy. What is your name and where do you expect to lodge?'

"'My name is Jourdain,' I replied, 'but I am not certain where I shall stop. I am to be met by my husband, who has secured lodgings for me. Do not take the trouble to interest Dr. Dessault in us. It may be that my husband has secured another physician.'

"This suggestion of the young man, friendly as it was, had filled me with terror, for Dr. Dessault was the last man whom I desired to have see this child. He was the only man who had not been brought over to our cause who had access to Louis XVII., and knew him so thoroughly that he could not be deceived by substituting this child. Just how they would manage to prevent his declaring the fraud on his first visit after the abduction of the uncrowned king I could not tell, but this was not

for me to consider ; other subtle minds had it in charge.

" Arrived at Paris, I found Bellanger waiting for me, as we had agreed. He was surprised to see my companion, who insisted on carrying the child from the diligence to the cab, and repeated to Bellanger the suggestions which he had already made to me, asking again for our address, that he might send Dr. Dessault to us. Bellanger was much alarmed, and gave him a false address, and we drove away as fast as possible, looking back frequently to see if we were followed, and only reassured when we found that we were not. He took us to a mean room, in an upper story of a house on one of the small streets back of the Temple. From its window we could see a portion of the parapet on the roof of the prison. It was here that Gomin would display a signal—a white cloth if by day, and a lantern if at night—when the propitious time arrived for the exchange of the children.

" Bellanger told me that other Royalist agents would endeavor to induce Dr. Dessault to go to the provinces for a few days to attend a special case, that they would delay him there as long

as possible, and in his absence the exchange would be made. The child that I had brought had grown rapidly worse, and Bellanger and the keepers of the prison hoped that he might die, and his death and burial be attested during the absence of Dr. Dessault by physicians not acquainted with Louis XVII. We were somewhat puzzled at this stage of our proceedings by hearing that the convention had agreed to deliver Louis XVII. on June 13th to Charette, the chief leader of the Vendean Royalists, and we doubted at first whether, in view of this new development, we ought to proceed with our plot. But Bellanger received secret intelligence from the Comte de Provence to hasten the matter, as he had no confidence in the good faith of the convention, and as it was to their interest that the young king should die before they were forced to surrender him to his friends, he might be murdered in prison.

"It was May 28th that we arrived in Paris. On the 31st an agent of the Marquis de Fenouil brought Bellanger a commission to act as commissary of the day and inspect the interior of the prison. This seemed to be the opportunity we wished, but as Bellanger was obliged to en-

ter and leave the Temple by daylight before the sentries, there was no opportunity to smuggle a child in or out. He used his opportunities to the utmost, and remained all day in the prison, on pretence of making a portrait of the young king, and I watched the parapet incessantly, but no white cloth was displayed. He improved his visit by becoming acquainted with the little prisoner, playing at making card houses with him, showing him the sketches in his portfolio, and attempting to gain his confidence, promising to come again and perhaps take him for a drive. More than this he did not dare to suggest, for fear the weak-minded child would babble to some one not in the plot. As he left the prison he passed Gomin on the stairs, who said, 'Dr. Dessault has not visited his patient to-day. I have just learned that he is ill. Illness was never more opportune, but it may not last long. Your work must be done to-night. I will make a little delay at ten o'clock, when we change sentries, and will keep both of them for four minutes in the guard-room over a bottle of wine. One will be called from his post two minutes before his time, the other go on two minutes later. In that four

minutes you must steal up the turret stair with the new child, and slip down again with the king. I will give him all the poppy syrup that Dr. Dessault left here ; he will sleep soundly.'

"I followed Gomin's example, and gave my sick child an opiate. Wrapped in an old cloak, I carried him to the quay opposite the entrance to the Temple at a quarter to ten, and seating myself on the ground, I held him on my lap and solicited alms of the passers-by, as though I were a beggar. A few moments later Bellanger appeared strolling up and down the quay. At precisely two minutes of ten the door of the prison opened and Gomin called in the sentry, leaving the door very slightly ajar. It was at this instant that Bellanger should have seized the child and have darted into the Temple, but at that moment, as ill-luck would have it, a man passed me and met Bellanger face to face. It was the stranger who had helped me in the diligence, and who now recognized Bellanger, and stopped him to inquire for me and for the child. He stood with his back to me and to the prison door, and Bellanger's face was opposite to me. It was wild with despair. I sprang up, crossed the street, and pressed my shoulder

against the door; it yielded, and I glided inside and up the stairs. I did not know the way as well as Bellanger, but I heard the sentries laughing and carousing in the guard-room, and I found the door of the royal prisoner's cell unlocked. It opened noiselessly, and little Louis XVII. lay before me in so profound a sleep that at first I fancied him dead. I quickly laid the poor little waif in his bed, and snatching up the boy-king, hurried from the room and down the stairs. At the next landing I uttered a stifled cry, for a man stood in front of the door leading into the guard-room playing noisily upon a violin. The next instant I recognized Bellanger's description of Gomin, and knew that he was there to cover my flight. He nodded his head rather anxiously, in a way that counselled haste, and re-entered the guard-room, still fiddling, the instant I had passed. I paused a moment at the outer door, to be sure that my exit was unobserved, but Bellanger stood on the step in the attitude of a sentinel, and no one else was in sight. We hurried into the little side street, Bellanger dashing on ahead with the child, and I following more leisurely. As I turned the corner I looked

back and saw the sentry on duty in front of the door of the Temple, just two minutes behind his time.

"The diligence did not leave for the north until daybreak, and in the hours that intervened we listened in agonized suspense to every passing footfall, fearing that we were discovered. All went well, however, until we took our seats in the diligence, when, to our consternation, the same young man who had assisted me on my arrival in Paris, and who had passed the prison so inopportunely, entered and took his seat beside me. He seemed pleased at meeting me again, and asked if I had followed his suggestion in securing Dr. Dessault's services for my child. I answered truthfully that the boy had been under Dr. Dessault's care, and was greatly improved. Had it been the same child, the recovery would have been indeed miraculous, for shortly after Louis awaked and sat up. I had taken the precaution to bandage his face. The little king was silent, even more dazed by the effect of the opiate than in his ordinary semi-conscious condition, and the stranger did not notice the difference.

"Just what his position was we never knew, but he was some one in high official authority, for at the frontier the officers demanded our papers, and would have occasioned us great annoyance, and probably detained us until they could have heard from Paris, if our unknown friend had not vouched for us.

"The very diligence in which we travelled brought with it the news that Dr. Dessault had died the day previous; that there were suspicions of poisoning, and of a Royalist plot to abduct the king, for a dove had been seen to be released from the ramparts of the Temple that morning, which was thought to be a signal, and a police order was issued to all officials to arrest, on all the highways of France, any person travelling with a child of the king's age.

"It was here, in our moment of greatest peril, that the young man whom we had so feared saved us from detection, for he certified that he had travelled with me and with the child as we came to Paris a few days previous, and that the child we carried could not by any possibility be the king. Just in time, too, I remembered that I had in my bag the certificate from the hospital of Brussels of the other child's

dismissal, which I now produced, and we were allowed to continue on our journey.

"At Antwerp we embarked on a Dutch vessel bound for New York, but we did not breathe freely until we were far out on the great ocean. My brother had sent us word to proceed to Albany, and there to ask of one John Bleeker for letters, which should further instruct us.

"We found the letter which we had expected, telling us to leave a letter with him announcing our arrival, which letter Peter Vanderhuyden, a half-breed Indian, who traded between Albany and Ticonderoga, would carry to him, and he would come at once to meet us. This he very shortly did, and received our royal charge from my arms. We had brought with us no proofs of his identity or insignia of royalty, other than his cross of the order of St. Esprit, conferred on him the day he was born. This Gomin had given Bellanger, and he carried it, to his great peril, sewed next to his heart. The silver dove, badge of the order, and symbol of the Holy Spirit, also seemed to me a fitting emblem of the dove-like character of the young king. A dove had been released when he escaped, and I thought of the cry of the Psalm-

ist, 'Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest!'

"When my brother received the unhappy little king, it seemed to me that this prayer was answered, and that in the wilderness, near to nature's heart, he might find that peace, safety, and happiness which is denied to the dweller in the courts of the great. But tears came to my eyes as I parted from my gentle charge, and the tears washed away the vision, as drops falling upon a slate obliterate the writing. All became confused; and then, with a start, I recognized that I was neither the Royalist plotter nor the Indian woman who was to be the king's foster-mother, but simply an American girl who had become intensely interested in a not very authentic legend of the escape of the dauphin."

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE PALACE—TWO WOMEN OF THE EMPIRE—SOME PICTURES OF NAPOLEON.

EVER after the royal coach rolled away from its doors, carrying Louis XVI. and his family prisoners to Paris, was Versailles really a palace.

Napoleon, in all the audacity of the first brilliant days of the Empire, did not dare to establish his court here on the magnificent plan of Louis XIV., and Louis Philippe, when the Restoration brought him to the throne, felt the change in the mental atmosphere of the time, and inaugurated a new *régime* for Versailles.

Its history as a palace was comprised in the

reigns of the three Louis; henceforward, if it was to exist at all, it must exist not as the pleasant abode of royalty, but as a cherished possession directly enjoyed by the French people. The new king was wise enough to see this, and the Palace of Versailles became a tradition of the past, and the Musée of Versailles was born. Its magnificent gardens were thrown open as a public park, its long series of palatial apartments filled with paintings, illustrations of "all the glories of France," and as a museum of history and art Versailles took her new place in the march of progress.

The girls, as they closed their studies of the history of the palace, regretted that Napoleon had not identified his Empire with its historic halls, that he had preferred the Tuilleries and Fontainebleau for the ceremonies of his court, and that Josephine made Malmaison her Trianon.

It would have been interesting to have imagined the women of the Empire—Josephine, Hortense, Madame de Staël, and Madame Récamier at Versailles. Surely, if the gentle Josephine had been aided by the genius of Madame de Staël, by the tact and fascination of Madame

JOSEPHINE.

Récamier, she might have established a court here which would have been as decorous and dignified as that of Madame de Maintenon, without being as bigoted ; as accomplished and gay as that of Pompadour's, without its profligacy ; a continuation of all that was admirable in that of Marie Antoinette, without its tragedy. But Napoleon, though he knew men thoroughly, proved himself their master, and was the greatest military genius that the world has ever seen, did not understand women, could not control them, and made the supreme mistakes of his life in his relations with them.

Josephine was regarded by the French people and by himself as his good genius. He owed his first successes to her. As far as he was capable of love, he loved her ; and he must have recognized in the end that his divorce was "worse than a crime—a blunder." From that event all his misfortunes dated ; not that Josephine was in reality his mascot, his "star," but because that act was the revelation of a change in the man himself. He was no longer the same Napoleon, the young, unselfish enthusiast and patriot, the herô who snatched the flag from the dying standard-bearer, and led

the charge at Arcola (see illustration), who regarded himself as nothing, his country as everything. Now he was self-centred, blinded by gigantic egotism, unable to judge clearly between right and wrong, or no longer caring to be guided by the right, and his fall was inevitable.

Winnie regretted that the tear of the aloe had no power to unlock the door of the imagination leading into the halls of What-Might-Have-Been, and to show such a court at Versailles as Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier might have gathered. Napoleon himself must have felt what an immense aid the influence of these women would have been, for he tendered Madame Récamier the position of Dame de Palais, and tried to gain Madame de Staël by offering to give her the two million francs which the government owed her father, the Minister of Finance, Necker. But his efforts came too late ; he had offended the sense of justice, the pride, and the friendship of these noble-minded women, and he could not buy their influence with bare bribes. Winnie found their friendship at the same time one of the most ideal and real of which she had ever read,

and she studied the record of their lives with great interest. She traced the development of Madame de Staël's genius and opinions in her writings, beginning with her *Lettres sur les Écrits et le Caractère de J. J. Rousseau*, a book full of enthusiasm and eloquence for the new revolutionary ideas. It was the fashion, just before the Revolution, for the nobility of France to advocate liberal principles. It is possible that if the fall of the monarchy had not come in a more violent manner, it would have crumbled naturally under the march of ideas. Madame de Staël's political bias was for a constitutional monarchy, but she was so advanced for her period, so impassioned, and so courageous in expressing her views, that Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette regarded her with distrust. The memoirs of her grandson, the Vicomte d'Haussonville, tell of her efforts in effecting the escape of her friends during the Reign of Terror, a number of whom she was successful in saving. She fled from Paris to her estate at Coppet, in Switzerland, only at the last moment, publishing in London her *Réflexions sur le Procès de la Reine*, an eloquent and fearless defence of the queen. She had planned

a scheme for her escape before leaving the city. She entered into negotiations for buying a piece of property at Dieppe, and went there twice, taking with her, says her grandson, her son, who was about the same age as the dauphin, a man whose stature was very like the king, and two women, one of whom very closely resembled Marie Antoinette (Query.—Could this have been Gay d'Oliva?), and another not unlike Madame Elizabeth. It was her intention to allow the officials *en route* to become accustomed to seeing these persons, whose identity they had established, pass and repass, and on a third journey to leave them in the city and take with her in their stead the royal family. This was before their imprisonment, and the plot might have succeeded, but the queen refused to enter into it, and a few days after it was proposed and rejected all escape was cut off.

Madame de Staël employed the same means successfully for other noble fugitives, and her home was an asylum for the *emigrés*.

In her exile she wrote, striving to influence foreign powers in behalf of the queen. Marie Antoinette, in the isolation in which she was guarded, probably never knew of the efforts

of this noble woman, and died believing her her enemy. She returned to Paris under the Directory, just as Napoleon returned from the Italian campaign, and first met Madame Récamier at this time on selling her Paris residence to Monsieur Récamier. The two women were mutually drawn to one another, and became dear friends. Madame de Staël admired Napoleon at this time, and believed in him; but Napoleon had a great repugnance for literary ladies, and rudely repulsed her friendly overtures. He had, on the other hand, a great admiration for the beauty and social power of Madame Récamier, at this time the acknowledged queen of Parisian society. Her husband's wealth had given her social position, but her personal charm had secured for her her empire. Never, perhaps, was there a more lovely character enshrined in a more lovely form. It is said of her that she had a genius for friendship. Irresistibly fascinating and awakening on every hand the most impassioned affection, her purity of character, her wonderful tact, and her gentle sympathy exercised a calming effect upon her adorers, and her would-be lovers became her lifelong friends.

> "She walked within the heated glare,
> Her presence making purer air."

She knew how to make peace between violent enemies and rivals, and her salon was the meeting-place of leading men of every shade of political opinion. She exercised the same attraction over women that she did over men, and was always faithful to her friends, and the brilliant Madame de Staël had won her deepest affection as well as admiration.

But Napoleon and she played at cross-purposes. From their first meeting it was Madame Récamier's ill fortune to annoy and provoke him, without any *malice prepense* on her part, but from that malevolence which apparently governs the accidental. The first occasion was one of Napoleon's earliest triumphs. He had returned to France the conqueror of Italy, and on December 10th, 1797, the Directory gave a fête in his honor in the great court of the Luxembourg. The directors, dressed in Roman costume, sat at the foot of an altar, behind which was placed a statue of Liberty. Around this space swept an amphitheatre, in the first row of which were seated the public officials, and above them the invited guests. Madame

Récamier had one of these reserved seats. Napoleon was surrounded by generals, and every eye was fixed upon the young officer who had performed such brilliant exploits. Talleyrand gave a eulogy, and Napoleon replied with a few forcible words which elicited wild applause. Madame Récamier had never seen the young hero, and, moved by curiosity, stood up to have a better view of him. This action attracted the attention of the crowd. Her name, already famous on account of her great beauty, was whispered about, and the faces of the vast assembly turned, as by a common impulse, to look at that graceful figure, whose white dress outlined it like a marble statue against the dark background, and whose beautiful face was so rapt in its enthusiasm that she was not at first aware of the sensation she was creating.

Napoleon noticed it at once. He felt that he had lost the attention of his audience; a low murmur of half-suppressed admiration ran around the amphitheatre; for the moment the hero of the hour was entirely forgotten. Napoleon turned sharply and swept the concourse with a keen, searching glance to see who had dared to divert attention from him. His glance

met that of Madame Récamier's with such a harsh, angry expression, that she instantly sank into her seat. She had mortally offended his pride when she was simply expressing her admiration.

Two years later she was invited to a dinner in honor of the First Consul, given by Lucien Bonaparte, who had the *entrée* to her own salon at Clichy. Again Napoleon noticed the beautiful woman, whose entrance caused a little flutter in the drawing-room, but this time it was with courtesy, and as his brother crossed the room to greet his guest, Napoleon said to him playfully, "And I, too, would like to go to Clichy."

Dinner was announced, and as he left the room with his mother, Madame Letitia, leaning on his arm he spoke to his sister, who, as Madame Récamier passed her, murmured something which that lady did not quite understand, but imagined to be a compliment of Napoleon's. All seated themselves at table *sans ceremonie*, Second Consul Cambacérès taking the chair beside Madame Récamier, and Napoleon exclaiming as he did so, "Ha! ha! citizen consul, next to the most beautiful!" Madame Récamier

noticed at the same time that, while Madame Letitia sat at her son's right, the chair at his left was vacant, and that, though what he had just said was very complimentary to her, he regarded her with the same dark look which she had remarked on his face at the Luxembourg. He spoke little at dinner, and showed plainly that he was vexed, eating very fast and leaving the table before the rest of the company. He came to Madame Récamier when she returned to the parlor, and asked brusquely :

" Why did you not take the chair next to mine ?"

" I could not have so presumed."

" I told my sister to request you to take it."

And so by a misunderstanding she offended him again, for Napoleon would not believe that it was not an intentional slight.

He recognized the importance, however, of gaining her friendship. She was the most influential, the most admired woman in Paris ; her salon a power which he felt he must control. At the same time Madame de Staël had begun to write criticisms of the way in which Napoleon was centralizing power in his own hands, and he suddenly awoke to the con-

sciousness that here, too, was a woman possessing another kind of influence that he would have done well to have gained, and that he had now to deal with a dangerous enemy where he might have made a powerful friend. Then came the judicial murder of the Duc d'Enghien, the one great crime which Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier could never forgive. No offer of restoration of the immense fortune which France owed her father could move Madame de Staël after that, and though banished by Napoleon and virtually a prisoner at Coppet, she was more dangerous to him than a foreign army. He could conquer an army, but he could not silence this brilliant woman. She escaped from Coppet to Vienna, St. Petersburg, London, and Stockholm. She was everywhere an influence, both personally with the crowned heads, statesmen, and writers of Europe, and in her writings. She published her *Dix Années d'Exil*, *Corinne*, and *De l'Allemagne*. *Corinne*, the novel on which her literary reputation rests, is a picture of Italy, marvellous for its completeness and impressiveness, and exercising a great influence on the literary style of the time. The work on Germany, though faulty, is considered one of

the best treatises on any country which has ever been written by a foreigner, and awakened France to an appreciation of the fact that there "was something in the world which could be called German civilization."

In the mean time Napoleon had become emperor, and on establishing his court he offered the position of first lady of the palace to Madame Récamier. He had some reason to expect that she might accept it out of gratitude, if not from ambition, for he had yielded to her petition to release her father, who had been arrested for political reasons, but Madame Récamier had a strong repugnance to Napoleon. She distrusted him, and could not forgive his harshness in banishing her dearest friend, Madame de Staël, and she declined the honor with the approval of her husband. Napoleon took a very mean revenge for what he chose to consider an insult.

A little later Monsieur Récamier found himself in financial trouble, his bank would be forced to suspend payment unless a loan could be negotiated with the government. This Napoleon refused, making Monsieur Récamier a bankrupt.

Madame de Staël opened her home and heart to her friend, and she became her guest at Coppet. Napoleon, incensed by her apparent defiance in clinging to her friend, exiled Madame Récamier also, forbidding her to approach within forty leagues of Paris. But friendships are not broken by persecution, and the two friends were only the more united by their misfortunes. Madame Récamier was at her friend's bedside when she died, and met there Chateaubriand, who became her lifelong friend. She returned to Paris after Napoleon's downfall, and died there in 1849, in her seventy-third year. She preserved her charm until the end, receiving her guests with the same sweetness and dignity, though she was quite blind. Chateaubriand, though aged and a paralytic, came each evening, and was carried from his carriage to his arm-chair at her fireside by his valet and her footman.

Madame Récamier left scarcely a written word. She is remembered alone for her personal charm and for that "genius for friendship" which Napoleon could not gain.

Though Napoleon never established himself at Versailles, the student can follow his career

Napoleon at Arcola.

here better perhaps than anywhere else. In the *Salle des Batailles* and elsewhere in the *musée* are the great canvases, illustrative of his different campaigns, painted by David and Horace Vernet, the portraits by court painters Gérard, Isabey, Lefèvre, as well as many ideal conceptions painted by later artists.

Winnie's favorites were, first, "The Battle of Rivoli" (1797), by Philippoteaux. In this canvas the young general, with his long hair falling over his forehead and shoulders, has just had a horse shot from under him and has mounted another. It shows him at his best period, when his features were sharp and clear, his cheeks hollow, his lips mobile, and the inflexible will written on the face subordinated to noble purpose. Here are David's theatrical compositions of Napoleon as emperor, Gérard's "Austerlitz," Horace Vernet's "Friedland," "Jena," and "Wagram," the state ceremonies of Regnault, Isabey, and others.

Doubtless the noblest series of Napoleonic pictures is that painted by Meissonier, and of these two are owned in America, and the "Friedland" is in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Nothing can excel the enthusi-

asm of his soldiers as they salute the emperor. It is the same mad devotion which made them happy to die in his sight. But the grandest conception that an artist has ever given of Napoleon is Meissonier's masterpiece, "1814," which represents him "gloomy, silent, with face contracted with anguish, riding at the head of his discouraged staff across the snowy plains of Champagne."

It was that terrible Russian campaign which broke Napoleon's power which interested the girls more than any other period of his career. Opposite a photograph of Raffet's picture, "They Grumbled, but they Followed Always," showing Napoleon, worn out, wearily marching on, followed by his "old *grognards*," Winnie copied in her book of souvenirs Southey's poem,

THE MARCH TO MOSCOW.

The Emperor Nap he would set off
On a summer excursion to Moscow ;
The fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu ! parbleu !
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow !

Four hundred thousand men and more
Must go with him to Moscow :

There were marshals by the dozen,
And dukes by the score ;
Princes a few, and kings one or two ;
While the fields are so green, and the sky so blue,
Morbleu ! parbleu !
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow !

There was Junot and Augereau,
Heigho for Moscow !
Dombrowsky and Poniatowsky,
Marshal Ney, lackaday !
General Rapp, and the Emperor Nap ;
Nothing would do
While the fields were so green, and the sky so blue,
Morbleu ! parbleu !
Nothing would do
For the whole of this crew,
But they must be marching to Moscow.

But the Russians stoutly they turned to
Upon the road to Moscow.
Nap had to fight his way all through,
They could fight, though they could not *parlez-vous ;*
But the fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu ! parbleu !
And so he got to Moscow.

He found the place too warm for him,
For they set fire to Moscow.
To get there had cost him much ado,
And then no better course he knew,

While the fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu! parbleu!
But to march back again from Moscow.

The Russians they stuck close to him
All on the road from Moscow.
There was Tormazow and Jemalow,
And all the others that end in ow;
Milardovitch and Jaladovitch,
And all the others that end in itch;
Schamscheff, Souchosaneff,
And Schepaleff,
And all the others that end in eff;
Wasiltschikoff, Kostomaroff,
And Tchoglokoff,
And all the others that end in off;
Rajeffsky and Novereffsky,
And Rieffsky,
And all the others that end in effsky;
Oscharoffsky and Rostoffsky,
And all the others that end in offsky.
And Platoff he play'd them off,
And Markoff he mark'd them off,
And Krosnoff he cross'd them off,
And Boroskoff he bored them off,
And Kutousoff he cut them off,
And Parenzoff he pared them off,
And Worronzoff he worried them off,
And Doctoroff he doctor'd them off,
And Rodionoff he flogg'd them off,

And, last of all, an admiral came,
A terrible man with a terrible name,
A name which you all know by sight very well,
But which no one can speak and no one can spell.
They stuck to Nap with all their might;
They were on the left and on the right,
Behind and before, and by day and by night;
He would rather *parlez-vous* than fight;
But he look'd white and he look'd blue,
Morbleu! parbleu!
When *parlez-vous* no more would do,
For they remembered Moscow.

And then came on the frost and snow,
All on the road from Moscow.
The wind and the weather he found in that hour
Cared nothing for him, nor for all his power;
For him who, while Europe crouch'd under his rod,
Put his trust in his fortune, and not in his God.
Worse and worse every day the elements grew.
The fields were so white, and the sky so blue,
Sacre bleu! ventre bleu!
What a horrible journey from Moscow!

But the cavalier treatment of this horrible subject by the light, satiric poem exasperated her. She was more in sympathy with Tolstoy's temper of mind in his novel, *War and Peace*, that wonderfully realistic description from a Russian standpoint of this terrible tragedy.

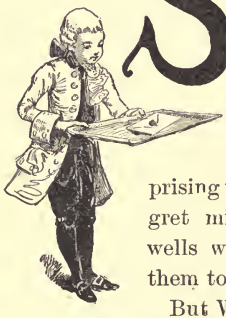
Before the beginning of this campaign Napoleon's victories had cost one million seven hundred thousand men killed in battle and millions more of wounded and disabled. His defeat was to cost many more lives, and yet they were given joyfully, readily. Why was it? It was because before the Revolution Frenchmen were serfs; with the call of the country for their lives came the gift of liberty and free institutions, and France poured out its blood unstintedly for *la Patrie.* The personal magnetism of Napoleon faded out as Frenchmen lost faith in him, but in the new ideas which came as monarchy passed away in liberty, fraternity, and equality they have not lost faith, and in defence of these they are still ready to give their lives.

With their brief study of the friendship of two women of the Empire and of the Napoleon pictures in the Versailles historical collection their stay under the shadow of the beautiful palace came to a close. They returned to America to take up the busy modern life of the New World, so different from the old romantic dreams of the past, but glad at heart for many of the differences, and especially for that liberty

and fraternity for which the Frenchman has striven so earnestly, but which we feel finds a fuller expression in America than in any other land.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LEAGUE OF THE JUNIOR PATRONS.



SO many delightful experiences had come to the girls at Versailles in their rambles into the past through the magic doors of history and art, that it is not surprising that a little natural regret mingled with their farewells when the time came for them to return to America.

But Winnie was not a girl to mope or sulk because one chapter of enjoyable living was closed. She was brimful of enterprise and enthusiasm, and when there were no "good times" ready to fall like ripe fruit into her lap, she set herself to work planting the lit-

tle seeds of kindness which bear "good times" before long for herself and others.

We have seen how helpful she was to Milly at Shinnecock immediately after her return to America, and when at the close of the summer at the sketching class Milly was so cruelly disappointed in Stacey, Winnie, to use a nautical term, "stood by" and was a stay and comfort, and later a joy and inspiration to her little friend in the dark days.

The joy came, as it always does, in working for others, the inspiration in a plan which Winnie developed for concerted action which engaged the efforts of many children, and in which the readers of this story are invited to join.

The winter after the girls' experience at the summer school at Shinnecock, Winnie, yielding to Milly's strong desire, visited her in New York, spending her mornings in work in a little studio which she shared with Tib, who had become an artist of more than ordinary ability. Of all the four who had started out with such high ambition and brilliant talents, Tib, the plodder, the one least gifted apparently by nature, had achieved the greatest success. Ade-

laide was soon to marry Professor Waite. She had relinquished her own personal ambition to become the sympathetic, appreciative, helpful wife of an artist, to throw all the art impulse of her own nature into his achievement, and in so doing we cannot say that all of her own effort and aspiration, or the opportunities of travel and education lavished upon her by her father, were in any way wasted ; they bore definite fruit, though in the work of another.

Milly, the one least interested, least talented of the three, turned to art again as an occupation, a consolation in the desert of her disappointed affection. Winnie, impulsive, working by fits and starts, ready to give up her ambition when her engagement with Van seemed to open the way into another life, found in portraiture an absorbing occupation and a means of support, now that the financial difficulties of the Van Silvers postponed her marriage.

Once more, too, Winnie turned her attention to the Home for poor children which she and her friends had founded in their school days, and which their absorbing occupations and adventures in Europe had caused them to neglect. The Home was still doing its good work, loving

hearts and generous hands were carrying it on, but the managers often felt their hearts ache and courage fail when they saw a hundred applications for admission where only ten could be received. They had missed the enthusiastic, willing work of Winnie and her band of King's Daughters, and welcomed with gratitude her return.

Winnie had a serious talk with Milly after her visit to the Home. "Something must be done," she said. "The Home cannot stand still, the work must either advance and meet the increasing need, or it will gradually fade out and be given up."

"Oh, no," exclaimed Milly; "that must never be."

"No, certainly not," replied Winnie, with decision; "but look at the situation. The Home has lost many valuable friends this year. Mr. Armstrong has died suddenly, and did not remember the Home in his will. If he had thought death was so near I am sure he would have provided for it. It teaches me a lesson. I've nothing to leave at present, but I am going to make my will all the same, and direct that one third of the ready money I happen to leave

whenever I do die shall be given to the Home."

"I am sure it is better to do all we can while we are alive," said Milly, "and I only wish I had more to give; but father has been so embarrassed by the financial crisis the past year that I suggested his giving me a smaller allowance."

"I know it, dear, and Mrs. Van Silver and Van cannot afford to give as generously as they did. What with the elder people dying and losing their fortunes, it looks as if the Home was to depend mainly for its support on the pennies of the children. And why shouldn't it? It was founded by children for children. It seems to me very beautiful that children should carry it on. I know of no exclusively children's charity in the United States, and there is surely enough power in the hands of American children to do a very noble work if we could only reach them all, and get them all interested. I have an idea," she said at last. "I will get up a baby show and give prizes for the finest babies, and when I have them all together I will tell them about the Home and interest them in working for poor babies."

Milly laughed. "Just like you, dear Winnie,

audacious and impractical. In the first place you never could manage a baby show. No mother would send her darling to be exposed to possible contagion from some other child who had undeveloped diphtheria or scarlet fever. It would be a flat failure, and even if you did get it up it would be only local, a New York City affair. You would not reach the out-of-town babies, the children all over the United States whom you wish to interest."

Winnie sighed regretfully. "I presume you are right, but I have a vision of how beautiful it might be. New York has horse shows and poultry shows and dog shows. Why not a baby show? I would have it in the Madison Square Garden, and one feature would be a baby-carriage drill, the nurses dressed in the costumes of peasants of different nations, and the carriages with their parasols decorated with flowers and flags. I would drill the nurses in the evolutions, something like the bicycle drill of the French soldiers, with empty carriages first, so as not to endanger spilling out the babies, and in the final parade we would have them well strapped in. Then I would get the various kindergartens of the city to co-operate, and we

would have not alone the work of the children, but the babies themselves would be there seated at their little tables, making their little mud pies and braiding their colored papers."

"Winnie! Winnie!" Milly exclaimed beseechingly, "think of something else; it is too much of an enterprise for us to undertake."

"My only objection to it is that it is not enough of an enterprise. As you say, it would appeal only to New York, and I want to think of something which will interest children everywhere."

Winnie thought, and gradually her ideas took shape in a *photographic* baby show, an exhibition of the photographs of children instead of the children themselves. She issued a little circular explaining her plan. The Society of Amateur Photographers of New York offered her their rooms for the exhibition, the Gorham Manufacturing Company struck silver and bronze medals for her, and the city newspapers spread the invitation.

Medals were offered for the prettiest baby, the judges to be a committee of artists; for the most perfect baby physically, as decided by a committee of eminent New York physi-

cians ; for the baby with most varied expression, the prize to be awarded by a committee of celebrated comedians ; for the most intelligent baby, according to the opinion of a committee of teachers ; and for the dearest and sweetest baby, the judges of this class being a committee of grandmothers.

That the exhibition would be successful was a foregone conclusion, but as Winnie's main object was to help the Home, she instituted at the same time a League of Junior Patrons and Patronesses of children who were willing to contribute one dollar annually to the charity, and only members of this League were permitted to enter into competition for the prizes.

From all over the country came letters inquiring about the Messiah Home, and the girls were kept busy for weeks answering them and telling of the work, with a result that at the opening of the exhibition the League numbered over four hundred members, and a handsome sum was realized for the Home. But Winnie saw that there were still greater possibilities with these four hundred names as a nucleus, and a meeting of the members resident in New

York was called for organization shortly after the exhibition.

It was a most interesting and unique occasion. The ages of the members present ranged from three to thirteen. The President (elected from his photograph by the children visiting the exhibition), John Francis Russell, aged nine, took the chair and made a very creditable inaugural address, which was roundly cheered by the children. Then other officers and committees were nominated and elected. The Secretary, the five-year-old daughter of Mrs. Donald McLean, Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution, made a brief address, which was supplemented by a brilliant one by her mother. Miss Betty Collamore, of 165 West Fifty-eighth Street, was made Treasurer, and little Edwin Gould, Jr., Chairman of the Executive Committee. The children were enthusiastic and yet dignified, and all their proceedings were conducted with a decorum and parliamentary order from which the Senate of the United States would have done well to take example. Speeches and motions were made from the floor, the youthful President presiding all the time with perfect self-possession, grace,

and dignity. Letters were read from absent members, and among them the following from little Van Wyck Ferris, of Yonkers :

" I'm only a tiny laddie,
Not quite on the stroke of five,
And yet as full of mischief
As any boy alive ;
But tho' I am small in stature,
I am very large in heart,
And in helping poor little children
I want to bear my part.
I am glad that you made me a ' Patron,'
I will serve you whenever you like,
And I hope that the little children
Will know I'm their friend

VAN WYCK."

It was evident that the parents welcomed the organization as educating their children in concerted philanthropic work, and a campaign was arranged for the coming season, in which the work of the League was to be done by the children themselves, and abundant opportunity afforded them in field days, business meetings, receptions, and *matinées* for meetings of social recreation. It was Winnie's aim to make the children enjoy their organization, to make them enthusiastic in working for it, and to have the

money tax so light that it would not be felt by any parent.

A Guard of Honor was organized for the boys, with a grand marshal at its head. It was decided that the guard should parade on field days, and should escort the little children at the Home to Central Park on May day, that its officers should act as ushers at entertainments given by the Maids of Honor, and hold themselves in readiness to assist them in other ways. A large number of the guard were at their own request made recruiting sergeants, and furnished with little books in which to enroll recruits from their friends.

The League decided that their first meeting in October, 1895, should be at the Messiah Home, and should be called Autumn Leaf Day, and at this meeting the recruiting sergeants should report their recruits—those having secured ten to be promoted to the rank of marshal, and presented with a badge. At the annual meeting the following spring the marshal who secured most new members would be made grand marshal for the ensuing year.

A division of the League analogous to the Guard of Honor was arranged for the little girls.

Any one who desired was made a member of the Entertainment Committee. Should she give a lawn party or other entertainment during the summer which would bring in ten dollars, she would, at the Autumn Leaf Meeting, be constituted a Maid of Honor. The Maids would be patronesses of all the *matinées*, carnivals, exhibitions, and other entertainments given by the League during the winter, and would give a reception to the guard. The Maid most successful in her efforts would be Queen of May on the next May day.

These were some of the plans made for the New York contingent of the League of the Junior Patrons and Patronesses; but the problem which absorbed Winnie's chief attention was how to interest children not living in New York in the charity, and what work to arrange for them.

The exhibition of babies' photographs had partially solved the problem, and it was decided to hold another similar exhibition in the spring of 1896, and at the same time to publish the first number of the organ of the League, a children's paper, edited, composed, and illustrated by children, the proceeds to be

devoted to the help of the children of the poor.

A staff of child editors were appointed, headed by little Gilbert White, youngest child of Dr. John S. White, Head Master of the Berkeley School, and by Master Karl Dodge, grandson of Mary Mapes Dodge, editor of *St. Nicholas*. The staff included children from a number of other American as well as several "European correspondents," juvenile artists were assigned to the art department, and an invitation issued to children everywhere to join the League and contribute to its paper.

To give an idea of the kind of contributions desired, and to stimulate effort, a prize of a beautiful silver spoon, designed and made especially for the Messiah Home, and decorated in *repoussé*, with a figure of Charity on the handle and cherub heads in the bowl, was offered for the best article, story, or illustration under each of the following classes:

1. For the best short story of some animal or animals, descriptive of their habits or intelligence or inculcating humanity.

2. For the best rhymed description of any athletic contest.

3. For the best description of any nautical event, of boats, fishing, or adventure by sea.

4. For the best tourist's letter descriptive of a visit to some remarkable place or person.

5. For the most humorous article or story.

6. For the best puzzle.

7. For the best contribution not included in any of the above classes.

8. For the best illustration (drawing in pen and ink).

9. For the most humorous drawing.

10. For the photograph best adapted for reproduction as an illustration.

11. For the most artistic design in any branch of applied art, as embroidery, wood-carving, etc.

12. For the best kindergarten design by a child not over five years of age.

13. For the brightest saying by a child not over five years of age.

(*Note.*—Those who have read the earlier volumes know of the Home founded by children for children in New York City, and that though many of the characters and adventures described in the Witch Winnie series are fictitious, this beautiful charity, the Messiah Home for Children, is as true and real in its working as it is lovely and ideal in its conception.

It is situated at 145 East Fifteenth Street, and gathers the children of working women who have no help from husbands, who are either sick, out of work, in prison, or dead, or worse than dead. Any woman who must go out to service or in some other way be the bread-winner, and can have no home of her own, can leave her children here to be cared for as children should be cared for ; sweet beds at night, good, wholesome food, neat clothing, capable instruction, loving care, all for the nominal sum of a dollar and a quarter ($1.25) per week. Of course it costs much more than this to give such privileges, and the necessary funds are made up by private subscriptions from kind people of all Christian denominations, for the Home is entirely unsectarian. For seven years, since the time of its founding by a circle of little girls, who built better than they knew, the Home has largely been helped by children. Circles of King's Daughters in various parts of the land have from time to time "adopted" a special child, making it their *protégé*, paying its board regularly and making its clothing. Sunday-school classes, circles of the Christian Endeavor, private schools have owned a "guest bed" in the Home, where the occupant was as truly their guest as if entertained in their father's house. The League, which is here described as of Winnie's forming, is really in existence, and all readers of the Winnie books are cordially invited to join it and to take part in the prize competition, which will remain open until March, 1896. Further information may be obtained by addressing Mrs. J. Wells Champney, 96 Fifth Avenue, New York.)

Winnie's work with the Junior Patrons is at this writing still an experiment. How it succeeded may be told, if our readers care to hear, in a sequel to Milly's Shinnecock experience (when Stacey, too, will strive to atone for his great fault), in a volume to be entitled "Witch Winnie in Holland." In the mean time we can assure our friends that the girls found the change from their dream life in Versailles to an active, unselfish life in New York an easy one —easy because the tears which had wet their cheeks through the magic touch of the tear of the aloe had taught them the mistake of the pleasure-loving voluptuaries of the past, had taught them that there is no safety for the nation which despises the cry of its poor, and no happiness for any individual, no matter how surrounded by luxury and culture, except in the divine enthusiasm of working for others.

THE END.

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